







NO OTHER ROAD  
TO  
FREEDOM

by  
LELAND STOWE

FABER AND FABER LTD  
24 Russell Square  
London



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For  
RIDA, BRUCE, AND ALAN  
who stayed at home



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## *Chapter 1*

# INTO THE BLACKOUT

**I** remember it proudly because there were no tears. Bob and I said the last round of good-byes and strode down the long broadwalk to where the Yankee Clipper lay immaculate and glistening in the autumn sun. It was the morning of 11 September 1939: cloudless skies, a perfect day to start off to the war. We had both been to wars before, Bob as an artillery captain with the A.E.F. and I to Spain some two years ago. Nevertheless we knew this was going to be different. Maybe it would be even bigger than we expected and maybe a lot tougher. Just the same we wouldn't have swapped places or tickets with anyone in the world at that moment. That's why the photographer, down the gangplank, caught both our faces wearing such wreaths you'd have thought we had just drawn a pair of winners in the Irish sweepstakes. We were off to the war at last and we were among the very few American reporters to get that assignment at the outset. Life was wonderfully good. Whatever happened or conceivably might happen, life was still wonderfully good.

So it was a perfect day and a perfect way to take off for England and the unknown. But the thing that really made it perfect was the fact that the home team was as big and grand as the occasion. The day the war broke out, Rida said: 'Of course, you've got to go. You'd be miserable staying home and reading about it.' Bruce might not yet be twelve and Alan not quite ten, but they had understood that too. Now there were no tears: just smiles and hands waving far up the white-posted broadwalk of Port Washington's transatlantic airport, and then three sets of hands still waving as the Clipper taxied out into Long Island Sound. Somehow I couldn't feel

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worried about the future or about coming back some day. A quiet assurance persisted that everything was for a purpose and everything would be all right. At that moment I simply felt more proud of the home team than I had ever felt before and Bob was proud, too, because Bob is like that.

We were out over the Atlantic and thinking many things, but mostly happy things and thankful things; and sometimes joking and laughing, because no one can spend even a few hours with Robert J. Casey without laughter for a companion; but always laughing as only a couple of middle-aged newspapermen can laugh when suddenly they find themselves as excited and anticipatory as when they were wide-eyed cub reporters. And sometimes we were silent with our own thoughts. Then I knew Bob was hoping and praying that Marie wasn't taking it harder, now that she was thinking of him on his way, flying to the war; and Bob knew I was thinking the same about the home team. Then we would shake that off, because you have to look ahead in life—and believe. Remembering and believing that, we both thought of the wonderful luck that was ours and the jobs we had to do. Thinking of the job reminded me of the Colonel's telegram, delivered to me a few hours after Great Britain and France entered the war.

'If you are still of same mind please come Chicago immediately for conference with me,' it read. It was signed: 'Frank Knox'.

I left New York for Chicago that same Sunday night, and on Monday, which was Labour Day, everything was arranged with marvellous rapidity. Twenty-four hours previously it had appeared I would be relegated to some routine function on the home front regardless of thirteen years' experience as a foreign correspondent and observer of Europe's disintegration. But Colonel Knox and Paul Scott Mowrer and Carroll Binder, respectively publisher, editor, and foreign editor of the *Chicago Daily News*, provided me with a way out and a way over. As the Yankee Clipper soared toward Newfoundland there was much for which to be thankful, not the least being that the *Daily News* foreign service was also a team

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and that all of the men on this team were convinced that ours was the best all-round foreign service operated by any American newspaper. I may as well confess that Bob and I were not at all false-modest about this conviction. We simply knew it to be a fact. After all, that's why we were on our way—to help maintain that reputation for first-class foreign-news coverage which the *Daily News* had won and richly deserved during World War Number One. 'Don't pay any attention to our editorial page,' Colonel Knox had said to me while underlining that these were his only instructions. 'Don't even read our editorials if you don't want to. All we want you to do is report the facts, and we'll write our editorials here in Chicago.' What finer assignment could any newspaperman ask for as he started off to a war?

It was early morning when the Clipper slushed easily to rest on the calm waters of the river Shannon and we climbed ashore at Foynes. An Irish inspector looked carefully through my passport for my Irish Free State visa, stamped it, and handed it back. Then Bob handed over his passport with an inevitable jocular remark and a big belly-shaking haw-haw-haw. The inspector looked at Robert's round face, at the Casey eyes and the Casey nose and the Casey chin, and he listened to the rollicking echo of the infectious guffaw which had rolled up and up from the mighty Casey midriff. Right there the diabolically subversive influence of Bob Casey, reporter and war correspondent, scored its first victory in World War II. The inspector looked and listened—and then handed Bob's passport back—unopened. Even in wartime Bob got into Ireland on his face. But who shall say that the face did not deserve it?

Not long afterward we were waiting on the quay for the British flying boat which would take us over to England. One of the passengers, a diminutive Englishman, remarked: 'I wonder if we will be on *shedule*?' (That's how he said it, so that's the only way to spell it.) Bob replied, 'Well, I don't know whether we're on *schedule* or not.' Very gently but very firmly the little Englishman riposted: 'Well, I hope we shall be on *shedule*.' And with that the irrepressible Mr. Casey



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boomed forth: 'Listen. Don't blame me for *schedule*—I learned it in *shool*!' Yes, we felt lucky to be going to the war and at being almost there; at any rate, near to what we then thought was the war.

Late that afternoon we landed at a port in southern England. Since we had had to stop over a night in Nova Scotia, it was now the 13th—lucky number, I thought, recalling how my first Clipper flight of the previous June had been my thirteenth crossing of the Atlantic and how splendidly everything went. But Bob and I were looking eagerly for indications that millions of Germans, Frenchmen, and Britishers had now been locked in mortal combat for ten whole days. The harbour control acted extremely alertly, yet we could discern no evidence of strain or anxiety among the faces which watched us curiously as we disembarked. Customs officers were most courteous and helpful. 'Oh, no. No air raids,' they said. 'Everything's very quiet here. You'll have no trouble at all getting up to London, sir. Cheerio.'

So cheerio and here we were on a train full of cheerful people, chugging up toward London through the descending twilight, Bob and I sharing a compartment with a one-legged, retired British brigadier-general. He had come over with us on the Clipper and his, undoubtedly, was the first artificial leg that had ever gone out of order and been 'operated on' by a Pan-American Airlines steward at some nine thousand feet above the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Both the leg and the general were none the worse for this unprecedented event, whereas it had afforded positive delight to certain of the peculiar quirks in Mr. Casey's Celtic-lined cerebrum. But the general was more remarkable by virtue of the fact that he was a staunch champion of moral disarmament and, most especially, because he was one of the exceedingly few Britishers—among all those whom we were to meet for a long time—who really believed the United States ought to keep out of the war. We all agreed on that as our local train plodded onward through the amazingly peaceful countryside, until suddenly night had come and we realized there were no lights in our carriage or anywhere around us and now the

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blackout had caught us, and this thing which we could not see was the first thing that really looked like the war and we knew, at last, that we were in it.

The friendly, green, manicured landscapes of England had been blotted out almost before awareness lightened our minds. Now the general and Bob and I were riding through an eyeless England, riding through a fabulously silent land which probably had never before been so completely blanketed with night, never so lacking in illumination since the days of Robin Hood, if even then. The land had been converted, within the space of a few minutes, into a stupendous stage setting for the witches of *Macbeth*. As our train burrowed slowly and haltingly toward London, large towns became mere blotches beneath the mist-hung overcast sky. We strove to discover pinpricks of light, to discern passing objects, but it seemed that all light had vanished from the earth. Occasional rows of roofs cut momentary, jagged silhouettes against the backdrop of the night. Then blurred habitations, apparently nothing but empty ghost houses in a world of phantoms, emerged to etch themselves indistinctly in our feeble line of vision and fell back into the common darkness once more.

In this world nothing seemed to move except our mole-like train and a few railroad employees on dim station platforms where we halted briefly. Only once did we see an automobile driving on a country road. We traversed miles and miles without seeing a single lighted window, or even a street lamp, to right or left. Village after village slipped past us, motionless and soundless, like cardboard creations for a futurama of 'the night of to-morrow'. It was not yet half past eight o'clock, yet this new England might already have gone to bed for a twenty-year sleep. I had seen blackouts in Madrid, Valencia, and Barcelona, but had never dreamed that an entire nation, within the space of ten days of war, could be blanketed back into the night-time of the Elizabethan era with such thoroughness as this. Already we had passed through Winchester and Woking, but they had been absolutely unrecognizable.

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'By Jove, they *have* done an amazing job, haven't they?' the general exclaimed.

Indeed they had. We went on into the night, and towns, trees, and hills all merged into the unbroken rhythm of the mysteriously darkened landscape until it seemed that England had lost both her eyes and her population. For all that we could see, the blurred shapes and dimmed, shifting horizons outside our windows might have been part of loneliest North Dakota or of a sparsely settled district in South Africa. Considerable time had passed, but we had seen little more of visible objects than we had seen of time itself, and our ghost train pushed doggedly onward: now a befogged halt and then on again. All this while, at frequent intervals, I noticed that the brightest light in this strange world was the tip of Bob's cigarette whenever he took a long pull. The very occasional street lamps were much dimmer than that. In fact, it almost seemed as if Bob's cigarette assumed the proportions of a beacon. You wondered if some conscientious attendant would come along and suppress it.

Finally the train stopped again in its poky, indecisive fashion and while we waited for it to make up its mind a tiny blue light, very tiny but quite startling, came on above our heads.

'Guess we must be getting near London,' Bob said.

'Yes, I believe we'll be there in another fifteen minutes,' said the general.

So we went on chatting and speculating about what London would be like in the blackout, waiting for our mechanized mole to make up its mind and start burrowing again. Then somebody yanked our compartment door open. The conductor poked his head inside and remarked: 'Waterloo Station, sir. Aren't you getting off?'

'My God!' exclaimed the general, Bob, and I in chorus. We followed it up with various other exclamations as we scrambled for our bags. It was utterly fantastic and almost unbelievable. After all, we had travelled through some of the most densely populated suburbs of the world's largest city—right into the heart of London itself—and we still thought we

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were miles from Waterloo Station. On the platform you could still harbour this illusion. Porters were as unsubstantial as wraiths, or at least as ferrymen are supposed to be on the river Styx. At last two phantoms, possessed of voices and hands, took our bags, and Bob and I said cheerio to the general—something which nearly cost us our luggage for the night, because there was so little light under the platform roof that the phantoms were immediately swallowed up by the utter darkness from which they had come. We groped our way to the exit, lit matches to identify our bags, and finally hauled ourselves inside a chunk of blackness which the porters said was a taxicab.

There followed an equally fantastic cab ride through London's blackout, where all drivers seemed to function by pure instinct and to survive by purest chance. For the first time upon arriving in London I had no confused awareness of left-side traffic. It didn't seem there was any side, left or right, where we were going. It didn't even seem there were any streets. We were jerking and sliding along through an almost impenetrable fog, saying: 'What in the hell can *you* see?' 'Nothing! What can *you*?' Or: 'Mother of Moses, so this is the blackout in London! But where is he going? Is that a street he's turning into? It looks like a wall. Boy, did you see that murky eye lurch at us? Right by our fender. Must have been a truck. . . . Holy smoke!' 'Smoke, my eye. Smoke was never like this.' Then a complete stop which appeared to be in the middle of nowhere or in the middle of the Mammoth Cave. 'Here you are, sir. Victoria Hotel,' said the taxidriver. 'Please watch your step, and feel your way around the curtain at the door.'

Once inside we blinked and blinked under the dazzling lights, but managed to sign our names. The clerk behind the desk was most efficient and normal, business as usual in his every word and gesture. 'Whenever you go out don't forget to carry your pink slip with you, sir,' he warned. 'If there's an air raid you can't get back into the hotel without your pink slip.' So we were in London at last. The elevator man carried my bags to my door and opened it for me. He stood

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very straight like a man with something important on his mind. After a slight pause, during which indignation triumphed over ingrained British reticence, he came as close to a verbal explosion as an Englishman is likely to come. 'And what do you think of that bloody Mr. Hitler?' he burst forth. It was unanimous and we both felt better; but in fact I had been feeling better and better all the way to the war and so, quite obviously, had Robert J. Casey.

It was nearly midnight: which meant, for two war correspondents newly arrived in London, that the night had scarcely begun. Bob and I had to see Bill Stoneman as soon as possible and then Bill took care of everything after that. Bill Stoneman had covered himself with glory while covering the Ethiopian war and ditto as *Daily News* correspondent in Stockholm, in Rome, and later in Moscow. For some years now, as a London correspondent, he had won universal respect for both his ability and his integrity. I had heard a lot about Bill, from Ralph Barnes and others who had worked with him far and wide, but had never met him. Now here was Bill, tall and tense and straight-eyed and clean-jawed, and within the first sixty seconds you knew that he fully rated his place as a veteran on the team, just like Edgar Mowrer, Wally Deuel, John Whitaker, and the others. And within the same sixty seconds you knew that Bill's advance standing among the men of his own craft had been in no way exaggerated and you could always work together, and so long as you were in London Bill would rank as your boss, and that would be all right with you. At that moment Bill, Bob, and I all felt quite lusty. Bring on your war! That's the way we felt; and none of us, not even Robert, who was a youngster of around fifty, was old enough to feel ashamed of the cockiness or the enthusiasm.

'Step on it,' Bill was saying. 'Knick and Walter and John are all waiting for you fellows over at the Berkeley.' So Bill chaperoned us through more tunnels of abysmal darkness and up to Hubert Renfro Knickerbocker's suite and into this den of international experts, where, in so far as these first days of the war were concerned, Bob and I were most certainly just

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a couple of babes in the blackout. Probably it will come as a surprise to you when I state that wherever H. R. Knickerbocker, Duranty, and Gunther are assembled together conversation waxes exceedingly animated, whether highballs or beer is being served or even nothing at all. In fact, it has sometimes been a mystery to me how the members of this trio have contrived to convene through all these years and still succeed in exchanging ideas. But they have and they do, though the exchanges are often conducted in three directions all at the same time. On this first night here we were—Renfro, Walter, John, Bill, Bob, and myself—and all of us had seen the war coming and had tried to make people see it was coming; so it seemed, if anybody had a right to be here and be interested in the war, then we had that right. Maybe there was a certain cold comfort in that. Anyway it was good to find out what the others thought about the war, providing most of us didn't all try to talk at once—as of course we did.

'Now what we want to know is what America is going to do about it,' Renfro demanded with the crispest drawl that ever came out of Texas.

'What are they saying at home?' (This from John.)

'What do Americans think?' This from Walter.)

'What we mean is, when is America coming into the war?' explained Renfro, this time with an admonishing wave toward the Gunther and Duranty chairs.

'Not for a long time yet,' said Bob and I, or words to that effect; and with that the fireworks began. I couldn't begin to give you a verbatim account of the next two hours of conversation, but I can vouch for an authentic condensation.

Renfro was already as excited as a man with a generous capacity for moral indignation and a thoroughly realistic knowledge of Hitlerism could be. 'But how can the American people fail to see that we've got to come into this war, and the surest way to win it is for us to come in now?' he demanded.

'But the American people do fail to see it,' I said. 'After all, who killed the Spanish Republic? Who sold Czechoslovakia down the river? The same men who are running Britain and

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France to-day. Why should we come in so long as the British and French themselves continue to pay for the luxury of keeping Chamberlain, Daladier, Bonnet, and their likes in office? Why should we place any confidence in—'

'But, for God's sake, man' (this from Renfro), 'can't the American people see that the one thing we've all got to do is defeat Hitler? Do you mean to say that you think anything else? What on earth—'

'Let Lee talk,' interrupted Walter. 'What we want to hear is what the Americans think, Knick.'

'Well, I think Bob will agree with me. All I can tell you is that an awful lot of Americans are still sour about Munich and the men who made Munich, and a lot more are just plain isolationist. A lot of them feel as I do, that the blindness and cowardice of the British and French governments encouraged Hitler and gave him the chance to conquer Europe. Chamberlain, Daladier, and the rest of them bought this war. Now let them stand up to it. Maybe things will be different later on. But I tell you honestly, Renfro, I don't think America under any circumstances should have anything to do with this war until the appeasers of Hitler have all been given the gate.'

Bill Stoneman, who hated the appeasers as deeply as I did, couldn't see it my way any more than Knick could. But Bob was fresh from the Middle West and his opinion about the state of the American mind was identical with my own. Bob knew all about what happened in the U.S.A. before we entered the last war, too, and he had fought in France and loved France—but why should Americans be stampeded into this war before the Allies had even shown whether they really intended to fight? To that Renfro had his own answer. He was convinced America would be in the war within three weeks or three months, I can't now be sure which it was. In any case Bob and I insisted nothing like that could or would happen.

I remember I thought Renfro was too much influenced by having lived and reported the prelude to this war from Europe. Probably he thought I was blinded by my repug-

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nance for the Munich-makers, or too much influenced by the feeling: 'Let them pay for their folly'; and to a large degree this was undoubtedly true. But that was how I felt on that first night in London, as I had felt for a long time now, and increasingly since Spain. You could say the United States had its share of responsibility for the failure of the 1919 post-war settlement, but you couldn't establish that America had been chiefly responsible for the unhampered rise of Hitler, for Great Britain's failure to rearm herself in time, for Anglo-French failure to impose oil sanctions upon Italy at the time of the invasion of Ethiopia, for the British and French governments' criminal co-operation with the Nazi and Fascist warfare in Spain through the farce of their so-called Non-intervention Committee, for the destruction of hundreds of thousands of Spanish republicans who had never been remotely Communist, for the swallowing up of Austria. . . . No, the record stood that Europeans had done the most to create the totalitarian monster which was Nazism. The American people knew the record too well. Now that Hitler had taken the logical and clearly foreshadowed step of precipitating another great European conflict, let those who had failed to take a whole series of equally clear and logical steps to curb Hitler now stand up to bar his path and to foot the bill for their own delinquencies.

That might be rather cold-blooded reasoning, yet, at worst, it was no more so than that of the Chamberlain-Daladiers in regard to Madrid one year and at Munich another. In any case Americans had a right to know whether the British and French would really fight; and the right to question whether premiers and governors who had lost the peace could be trusted, or should be trusted, to win a second Armageddon. We talked long and late about all this on that first night in London. I fear I was a disappointment to Renfro and Bill and perhaps to some of the others. Yet, looking back, it was a faithful American reaction to the new cataclysm which had struck the world; and this, too, was my sincere conviction at the time. As far as the United States of America was concerned, I was a non-interventionist about World War II.



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I knew the Nazi system must be checked and destroyed or it would menace us eventually quite as formidably as it now menaced all Europe. But who should doubt that Great Britain and France, with their vast empires and their fleets and their Maginot Line, could defeat Hitler and Nazism in the end? If that finally appeared dubious, then let the British and the French carry the brunt at least until they had cleaned house and adopted leadership that was capable of resolution and worthy of trust.

On the night of 13 September 1939 things seemed as simple as this to me, and increasingly so for many months afterwards. By all means, and for the sake of all peoples yet free, Adolf Hitler and his movement must be crushed. But was it not as plain as the Nelson Monument in Trafalgar Square that in order to defeat Nazism Chamberlain and his like must first be defeated? So back through the blackout to the Victoria Hotel and so to begin living out of a suitcase, for how many months or years no sane newspaperman would venture to foretell.

## *Chapter 2*

### THE WAR THAT WASN'T A WAR

**T**he trouble with this war is you can't get your teeth into it.'

At the end of our first week in London this was Bob Casey's complaint, both as an old war-dog of the A.E.F. and as a newspaperman. Having celebrated Armistice Day, 1918, peeling potatoes in an R.O.T.C. camp in Middletown, Connecticut, I had nothing like Bob's authority on this subject. I was just one of the legion of ex-corporals, vintage World War I, who had never grown a pint-sized moustache or started a revolution. Nevertheless, I had been a foreign correspondent for the greater part of the past fifteen years and this alleged second Armageddon gave me the same feeling of frustration at its outset. Newsmen soon began to ask themselves: What's the matter with this war anyway? Some of us, looking with fresh eyes at the British scene during that autumn of 1939, also asked: What's wrong with England?

In those early days there was little in the demeanour of the average Londoner to indicate a recognition of the fact that the British Empire had become involved in a life-or-death struggle. Aerial 'sausages' afloat in the London skies by day and the blackout by night were the chief reminders that something had changed, yet even these symbols were half unreal, things you could never quite lay hands upon. After nightfall we groped our way about and that was exactly what the Chamberlain government seemed to be doing. A sense of great urgency and bold decisive action were utterly lacking. Downing Street was playing for time and counting on time, on everything working out in the end, and this mental atti-

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tude cast a palsy upon all sorts of wartime preparations and adjustments.

I remember walking London streets and being surprised and shocked at the extraordinary number of young men, unmistakably of military-service age, who still wore civilian clothes. 'Why aren't you calling all available men into the armed services?' I asked. The reply was always the same. 'They really aren't needed now. You see, with their Maginot Line the French won't need many of our boys for a long time yet. Besides, they say we haven't got enough equipment to supply another three hundred thousand men even if they were called up. Obviously you can't make soldiers out of men if you can't give them uniforms. In time we'll get the uniforms and equipment all right.' Bob and I used to growl to each other, completely unconvinced. We observed the small minority of Englishmen who were already mobilized and they were most unimpressive to look at. The private soldiers were rarely husky enough to fill their uniforms across the chest. They had none of the wiriness of the French or the universal robustness and solidity of the Germans. In comparison the average Englishman was a rather puny little chap. He had never seen the playing fields of Eton and he was far from muscular. Decidedly, a man from Mars would never suspect that the average British male belonged to a race of sportsmen. When I contemplated the samples of masculinity I saw about me day after day, I was both irritated and filled with doubts. It would take months to whip most of the sons of Britain's middle and lower classes into shape to be soldiers or sailors. Why don't they call them up and march them eight or ten hours a day? I thought. You don't need uniforms to put muscle on men. They're going to need it later. They're in no shape to handle a gun now anyway. Can't they see that these fellows need regular exercise, a hard outdoor life, and plenty of good food? Alongside the average German these young Englishmen wouldn't stand a chance to-day. What are Chamberlain and the rest of them waiting for? Don't they know England's at war?

Admittedly London had changed somewhat, and for the

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better, but the tempo of this sprawling metropolis had not altered greatly. War had come, yet public demonstrations of any kind were virtually non-existent. We looked in vain for war posters. If posters for recruits, even recruits from specialized trades, were curiously lacking, so were posters which supposedly might have been urging Mr. and Mrs. John Bull to put their civilian shoulders to the wheel. Maybe the British did things differently. Nevertheless you wondered over this studied restraint. There was no public enthusiasm for the war and no public leadership to make the common people see that a tremendous, united national effort must be made. At first everyone waited for the bombs to fall. When weeks passed and the Nazi bombers failed to appear, that helped to strengthen the illusion that the war was far away and there was still plenty of time. Britishers, apparently, could still pride themselves on being the rare kind of people who never got excited about anything, even a war. The Prime Minister's speeches in the House of Commons contained a little more stubborn affirmation than previously, but if any trace of emotional appeal or passionate conviction crept into them these soul-warming ingredients were always tightly leashed. Seemingly, it would be bad taste to jolt the British people—to tell them they must wake up and wake up quickly.

One morning I asked my chambermaid to make up my bed the other way round. Actually I didn't want to be aroused by having the daylight in my eyes, but the Cockney maid's reaction was: 'You don't think we'll 'ave any bombs, do you?'

'Well, sooner or later I guess we're bound to have them.'

'I don't believe it,' said the maid. 'But I was thinkin' this morning, after it's all over what good'll it do? Smash everything and everybody—that's all.'

Somehow she expressed the deep and widespread British feeling about the futility of the whole distasteful business. Why did this war with Hitler and the Nazis have to be fought anyway? They, the people of England, hadn't wanted it. Perhaps there was still a chance that it wouldn't come too close to them. What was the use of fighting people when you didn't hate them? . . . What was the use of fighting? That was what

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the leaders of a war-time government should have been telling the nation, utilizing devices to make them see and feel and understand. But London, this first autumn of the war, was strangely devoid of rallying devices or rallying leadership. We lived in an atmosphere which was predominantly synthetic and tried to write newspaper dispatches which would make the war sound real.

What disturbed me especially was the lack of fighting spirit, the absence of galvanizing elements upon which a crusade—to save free parliamentary government or even to save the British Empire—could be built. Well, perhaps that was also the phlegmatic British way. Maybe it was different with the comparatively few men already with the colours.

Then one night Bill Stoneman and I went to a joy-fest of the London Irish Rifles over near Clapham Common. It was an informal party of officers and men, designed to give the ranks a good time and keep them pepped up. The London Irish put on a good show and Rifleman O'Shaughnessy won merited acclaim with his impersonation of George Arliss. Finally a quite passable Adolf Hitler, followed by a less recognizable Field-Marshal Göring, stalked out on the platform and launched into a torrential diatribe—in remarkably good German. This aroused howls of laughter. Then something happened for which I was totally unprepared. 'Marshal Göring' threw up his right hand in the Nazi salute and shouted: 'Sieg Heil!' Immediately British officers and the men returned the salute with cries of 'Sieg Heil!' I looked around trying to conceal my surprise. As far as I could see, Bill and I were the only persons in the crowded hall who were not giving the Hitler salute. A moment later I was literally stunned when the rollicking London riflemen broke into *Deutschland über Alles* and sang the entire chorus in lusty German. 'I guess you're in the wrong place, Stowe. Or you've gone to the wrong war,' I thought.

Of course, it was only a bit of horseplay, but I couldn't keep the deeper intimations of this incident out of my mind. How were these amateur soldiers, many of them underfed all their lives, going to defeat the hard, ruthless, terribly efficient

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Nazi war machine if they were encouraged to treat their enemy as a joke? Could anyone conceive of a regiment of German soldiers indulging in this kind of slapstick amusement in English at a moment like this? Morale was something to be cultivated, right enough. But so must *fighting* morale be cultivated. The Nazis and their millions of iron-muscled trained youth were in dead earnest. They would wipe out two or three million happy-go-lucky youngsters like this, without mercy or compunction, to achieve their ends. The Nazi salute was far from being a joke. It was a menace to every British subject, man, woman, and child. Couldn't these people see this? How could their leaders think they could win a war without a crusading spirit? Why were their people not being hammered and hammered with the grim realities? What was wrong with England?

In my journal that night I noted that 'these people may fight because they have to, but they have no heart for the war as yet'. The war was only a month old, but this opinion, even then, was shared by many thoughtful Englishmen. That same week a Britisher of importance confessed to me: 'I wish Hitler would bomb London. It would be one of the best things that could happen to us.' Every now and then, as the synthetic war dragged along, I heard this same sentiment expressed. But Hitler was much too wise to bomb London before he had completed all the other essential conquests. It was not to his advantage to stir up the English, knock the scales from their eyes, and start their blood circulating above normal. If the poky old British chose to nourish the illusion that this war was like the last one, so much the better for the revolution of Brown Bolshevism. Hitler was counting on the snail's-pace evolution of public opinion in England; on the established habit of British politicians of never changing prime ministers so long as the nation's appointed first horseman could remain in the saddle on a walking horse. He was also counting on the age-old British illusion that England always muddles through.

Nevertheless there were many among ordinary Englishmen who were awake to the peril of Nazism and craved for

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decisive action. One of these was my tailor, a mild little man with the soul of an artist and a typically British pride in work well done. I hope the bombs have spared him and his shop—not because of the brand-new suit which I left with him when I had to rush off to Finland, but because he was the kind of citizen that England and the world needs badly. You could see Mr. Blurton only three or four times and, despite all they say about British reserve, he would always be your friend. It wasn't like him to speak with intensity of feeling, but one day, just as I was about to leave, he surprised me with a few blunt, clean-cut words about the war. 'Understand me, I'm a pacifist,' he added. 'And I've got a son who'll be called up for service next year. But, by God, we've got to see this thing through, once and for all.' That was the unexploited quality which lay smouldering far below the British surface, waiting for desperate days and catastrophe and a Churchill to fan it into a nation-wide flame.

Meanwhile, who could expect the man who had lost the peace to lead a successful crusade to win the war? Intelligent Britishers knew there was only one answer to that. But they were paralysed with impotence, or resigned to acceptance of the tradition that nothing truly British (with the possible exception of a racehorse) ever moved with speed and dispatch at the start. Or they were sceptical, like the very intelligent Mrs. T—. 'After they defeat the Nazis, what then?' she asked bitterly, having in mind the attitude of the British Tory government toward Republican Spain. 'They still have to defeat the *British*. . . . No, I don't think that's so likely to happen, not with the English people being what they are.' Of course, this was long before tens of thousands of bombs had been showered down upon the people of the British Isles. Perhaps Mrs. T— would have a different opinion to-day. It has been my observation, in several countries, that bombs are one of the most effective instruments for the stimulation of hard, clear thinking that human beings have yet invented. Men and women who have been bombed think about a lot of things with unprecedented intensity. They ask themselves a good many questions, and they suddenly know these ques-

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tions are important and they must find an answer. In the autumn of 1939, in the opening phase of the 'phony' war, such incentives simply did not exist, just as they still do not exist for the American people.

Irish Peggy, in the bar next door to our hotel in Cork Street, was from Belfast and whole-heartedly patriotic. 'We'll not only go to the brink of hell; if we have to we'll go through hell to win,' she declared. Then she asked: 'Is it really going to be very bad?'

'I'm fraid it's going to be plenty bad before it's finished,' I said.

Irish Peggy became desperately serious. 'But we've *got* to win.' A long thoughtful pause and then a remark I hadn't at all expected: 'The worst fault of the English is that they haven't any foresight. They're reliable and shy and once your friend always your friend—but they haven't any foresight.' I have never heard a more concise or a truer résumé of the causation behind the disastrous British foreign policies of the ten years which preceded the war. Innocent foreigners (an alien is what you are when you reach Britain) frequently bewailed the diabolical cleverness of the English. Peggy knew better, and that's why she was worried.

Sometimes we got the impression that many of the English were also not so sure about things, especially when they raised the inevitable question about when the United States was coming into the war. That subject was supposed to be taboo in governmental and other of the more polite circles. Nevertheless it was bound to pop out, here or there, and it did again and again. Usually you had to get a bit acquainted with a Britisher before he ventured to sound you out about America's role in the war. Through Frank Ryan I became friends with Captain Park, a deputy provost-marshal of London who knew a great deal about who was being watched in the British capital and where and why. He was a Scot and an excellent companion with a fine sense of humour beneath his crust of soldierly efficiency. When he asked: 'What are you people going to do?' he acted as if he was just pulling your leg, but he wasn't. One November evening the captain took us



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over to his club, and over the highballs he asked us the same question for the benefit of several friends. With a contagious, disarming twinkle in his eye: 'Well, what are you Americans going to do about it?'

'Follow your example and stay out of the war as long as we possibly can,' chorused Frank and I.

I'm afraid I let loose with my customary well-oiled contentions. I had recently rehearsed them quite elaborately to the son of a British admiral, a typical diehard young conservative who insisted that 'good old Chamberlain' had achieved a masterpiece of statesmanship at Munich. The admiral's son was in the navy, too, but had just had a splendid day shooting grouse somewhere out in the country. If Austria was only about six hundred miles from England and Czechoslovakia only a little more than that (I had said) and the British people had failed to understand why they ought to fight for the Austrians and the Czechs, why should they expect the American people—most of whom live from four thousand to six thousand miles' distance from England—to rush into this war overnight? The admiral's son had to admit that was a fair question; he hadn't thought of it in quite that light before. He seemed disturbed somewhat when I assured him this was a prevalent American point of view. While we chatted he also admitted he had never had any curiosity or particular desire to visit the United States. Behind his politeness you could sense a certain inherent dislike for or jealousy of America, something which has often raised a barrier between many upper-class Britishers and Americans as well as between Britishers and their own 'colonials'. It is an attitude seldom found among the common English people, but among the British ruling class it has served for years as a most unfortunate obstacle to Anglo-American friendship and co-operation. I have an idea this is another of those intangibles that the bombs have probably gone far to destroy in the British upper-class mind.

On this particular evening, however, the captain's friends belonged to quite another and a happier category. They were frank and they wanted to understand as well as to know. So

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I found myself reviewing a statement of the American position which, by now, had become quite thoroughly organized. If it had taken three or four years for the British people, living almost next door to Hitler, to understand that Nazism was a world revolution and a menace to England's existence—if the men who governed Britain had persisted in the folly of trying to appease the Nazis—if this and that—and if they had even resorted to the betrayal of Czechoslovakia—how could they ask the American people, far removed from any immediate and visible danger, to reach the same inevitable conclusion in six months or a year that the British had taken so long to reach? 'Besides, you could have stopped Hitler when he re-occupied the Rhineland. You could have kept both Hitler and Mussolini out of Spain. However ill prepared you were, why wouldn't you have done better with a million Czech soldiers mobilized behind their eastern Maginot Line, something far more powerful than any defence the Poles had? Why did you throw away an excellent moral case? Didn't you buy yourselves this war? Well, anyhow, that's how it looks to an awful lot of Americans, gentlemen. I'm merely saying that I'm not the only one who feels this way.'

There was much more along these lines, all very friendly, but hard and factual. The captain's friends were good listeners. They took it pretty seriously, suddenly beginning to see what a long way off from the war the American people were and how long it would be before the Nazi menace was their menace; or at least, before Americans could be expected to see that. In my heart I knew then that Hitlerism was a menace to us, too. But I was burning with wrath and disgust, nurtured and deepened from the days of the Ethiopian war, through the Spanish war, and on to the capitulation at Munich. Let them learn the hard way, I thought. Since they tolerated such leaders, such blindness, and such immorality on the part of the governing few, let them pay. If we have to go into the war there's no reason why we should go in until the British and the French have borne the brunt; in any case, until they have shown whether they really intend to fight. This is a 'phony' war. Let it become a real one. . . . Perhaps

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this was not a very enlightened attitude on my part; perhaps fearfully shortsighted, too, since I knew very clearly what Nazism is and means. Despite that, I clung to the conviction that America ought not to fight unless she *had* to fight, unless there was no other alternative. After all, the French had millions of men and the Maginot Line, and the British had a tremendous fleet. There was plenty of time, wasn't there? Moreover, it was something of a pleasure to tear aside the calm, almost naïve assumptions of many upper-class Englishmen and make them think. As we stumbled homeward through the blackout, Frank Ryan, who had lived and worked in England for years, laughed heartily. 'You know, Lee,' he said, 'there's nothing upsets an Englishman so much as a fact that he's never considered before.'

In those first weeks in London the war, or rather the camouflage that was called war, bristled with facts which Englishmen were not considering at all. Vigorous, dynamic prosecution of the war effort on every kind of front appeared to be one of the last things which either Parliament or public opinion would think of demanding. As one who had seen the work which both Nazi and Fascist bombers accomplished in Spain, I was appalled by the play-it-safe mentality that gripped the country more smotheringly than fog or blackout. In the *Sunday Times* Scrutator warned: 'Rash adventures would delay success.' This high-toned admonition, characteristically Olympian, was a fitting apology for half-way measures on the home front, where bold, swift action was a crying need. Not having been in England for several years, those years when Hitler had torn up the map of central Europe while tearing up the Versailles Treaty, it seemed incredible to me that the great war could be officially under way at last and yet the prevailing British slogan could still be: 'Let's not change horses unless serious trouble forces us to do so.'

By this time, I had thought, England's Labour leaders must see things clearly. I was quickly disabused in the course of a luncheon of American correspondents with Arthur Greenwood, popularly described as an outstanding hope of the Labour Party. Afterward I made the following notes in

my journal: 'Greenwood thinks the Nazis are likely to strike through Holland.' (This was September 1939.) '... Favours giving Chamberlain a chance. Maybe he'll be different now. ... Only justifiable cause for a change of government would be for failure to prosecute the war, not otherwise. Any inclination toward surrender to Hitler and he'd be out in ten minutes. But most difficult to pick a successor. Churchill is too erratic. ... No sharp criticism of the government. Give it a chance, muddle along, and let's see—amazing tolerance ... Faith that a leader will turn up like Lloyd George last time.' That same week British airplane production was reported to be 200 per month, with the prediction that it might be 500 per month in one year. Government spokesmen were counting confidently on Italy's remaining neutral, whereas I was merely echoing a widespread conviction among journalists when I confided to my notebook: 'It seems only a question of time and Italy will go in with Germany. The chief enemy of both the Nazis and the Fascists is the British Empire. Why don't they see it?' In an equally lugubrious frame of mind Bob Casey was off to France with the parting admonition: 'Don't worry. Old soldiers never diet!'

A few days later Bill and I had a long talk with an old friend of his, a young Conservative M.P. who was an officer and would soon be crossing the Channel with his regiment. 'Why don't you get rid of all the appeasers right away?' I demanded. 'How can you trust people like that to win the war for you?' The young M.P., one of the few in his party who had opposed Munich, shook his head sadly. It wouldn't be practical politics to do that, not in England. He admitted he could see no hope of winning until Neville Chamberlain and some of his confidants were cleared out. 'But the only way they can be ousted is on a big issue, with the whole nation aroused,' he said. 'It will take a major defeat to do that, I'm afraid.' Time proved his perspicacity. It took the loss of all Norway, and the loss of eight precious months on the home front. At the House of Commons, conversing with prominent Labour leaders like Herbert Morrison and Ellen Wilkinson, we found the same indisposition to launch a strong

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attack against Chamberlain as Prime Minister. Even the Labourites, those most bitter about Munich, had resigned themselves to giving Chamberlain another chance. Quite frankly, the only logical candidate to succeed him that they could envisage was Churchill and—well, Winston was 'unpredictable'. Unless he was well curbed he might go off half-cocked. Between risking going off half-cocked and maybe not 'going off' at all, Britain's parliamentary chiefs definitely preferred the latter gamble.

So this was England at war. No switch was being thrown to put a nation and an empire, faced with destruction, into a synchronized hum of power and purpose. Even as early as October, 'what with the British still not yet knowing they're at war and only Churchill and the blimps in the sky to remind them', the outlook was far more black and discouraging than any of us newspapermen could hope to report or permit ourselves to say, except among ourselves or in our notebooks. How could synthetic leadership produce anything but a synthetic war? Were they still blind? Couldn't the British people see? By November, filled with forebodings, impatience, and mounting wrath, I scratched down a few lines as a safety valve for my own feelings: 'Personally, I'll never believe Britain is out to win the war in a big way until Parliament applies a real house-cleaning. But it will take some awfully bad wallops to the British to precipitate such an obviously necessary emergency action as that. . . . More and more I think the British national symbol should be a tortoise or an ostrich instead of a lion. A lion really acts fast in a crisis. Few things could be more un-British than that.'

Yes, this was decidedly war that wasn't a war. But everything that served to contribute and prolong this fantastic state of unreality in Great Britain merely strengthened my own conviction that America should keep out. If the British would insist upon paying for the dangerous luxury of Chamberlain & Company, if they would persist in going slow, if they refused to mobilize and train every available man for a gigantic, tight-fisted effort, then why should we Americans be asked to foot the bill? In those days and for a long time

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afterward I used to get pretty riled when I thought about it and I spoke my mind quite bluntly whenever some hapless Englishman asked: 'Well, what are you Americans going to do about it?' In those days, of course, the British and French seemed to have a monopoly on the ostrich as a national symbol. 'They're so blind they can't see their own self-interest. That's what makes me sore,' I used to say; forgetting momentarily that the ostrich is a migratory bird, in one sense at least, and that men and women in almost every country seem to have an inexplicable but fatal propensity toward making the ostrich their own national symbol—or perhaps just a universal emblem of the age in which we live.

### *Chapter 3*

## BIRTHPLACE OF THE BLACKOUT

U ntil the war came I had never felt at home in London. Like most Americans who had lived a considerable period in Paris, I had found it difficult to discover the admirable and attractive aspects of London because of the more irritable short-comings of the British way of life. I have always hated silk hats, stuffed shirts, and appearances for appearances' sake. As a Connecticut Yankee I knew all I cared to know about some of the presumptive virtues of the Puritan-sired Anglo-Saxon gods, and quite a deal more about the inherent hypocrisy of certain of their vices. Somehow, going to London had invariably wound up with the predominant and painful flavour of a return journey into the days of my own adolescence. Moreover, my friends know me as an incurable 'snob about snobs' and that alone had disqualified me from any protracted feeling of contentment in London's West End or among a majority of the British ruling classes. These latter had a remarkable capacity for annoying me and to a point where I lost all desire to remain long enough to learn about their finer qualities. An American publisher had a formula which he asserted always worked perfectly: 'Insult a Britisher—and he will immediately respect you for it.' But I couldn't be bothered with that either.

Accordingly, it was strange to find myself really liking London for the first time in my life. Even without bombs the war had done something to this mighty capital, and especially to the people who lived here. Whether it was the blackout or a common prescience of dangers, horrors, and sufferings yet to come, the British wall of reserve had been broken down during the very first weeks following Britain's decision to

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fight. London was much more human and warm and informal than I had ever found it before. London had discarded its top hat and boiled shirt. Its men and women actually dressed as they pleased, seeming to relish a certain new-found freedom from rules of conduct which had previously been regarded as fixed for eternity. Englishmen were no longer afraid to laugh out loud in restaurants or night-clubs. English girls and women strode the streets with a new-found air about them; perhaps it came from an inner consciousness of the fact they were assuming a new position of importance in English society, that British males must hereafter recognize their more vital role in the nation's scheme of things. In any case, much of the traditional British armour had fallen clanking to the sidewalks. There was more ease and zest and naturalness than I had ever felt in London before. So, London, mysteriously and unexpectedly, was a most pleasant and exciting place to be in. It was as if a serious, extremely composed, and rigidly disciplined Victorian had suddenly been psycho-analysed into a capacity for unspoiled relaxation.

That was why I found a new joy in my morning walks through St. James's Park and past the ponds where the ducks bobbed blissfully and the white swans swam double on rare sunny days, and on to the *Daily News* office in Whitehall. That was why the mists made the bridges of the Thames more friendly than I had realized they could be; why London took on a breath-taking new beauty on those nights when the moon rose, brave and round, and revealed the curving roofs of Upper Regent Street in a delicate tender silhouette which most Londoners themselves had never known could exist. Then, when there was no moon at all, it was strange how you got used to riding around in cabs and seeing nothing, absolutely nothing. Walking home in the blackout became a bold adventure on such nights, but when there was a moon or a fragment of a moon we walked for sheer pleasure. When I walked alone my thoughts went voyaging; to Paris, Madrid, Vienna, New York, Bronxville, Mexico (because that was the land which must be visited and discovered after the war), then on to Buenos Aires and Geneva and back to London.



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But always the red thread of the war ran through all these places and ruminations, and always the centre of the web was the war itself.

Countless times I walked down Oxford Street, yet never without thinking of that magnificent phrase which Vincent Sheean had written while the war in Spain was still being fought. 'The Ebro River flows down Oxford Street.' In November 1939 I looked at the English clerks and shop-girls bustling along with their tidy blue, green, black, or red gas-mask boxes and wondered: Do they yet know that it's true? Do they see it now? No, probably not. The bombs haven't come yet. They won't see it until the bombs come—and maybe not then. Would it do any good to try to tell them? Probably no more than it did Jimmy Sheean. Just the same they've *got* to see it. How can they be blind about it now? But the afternoon crowds scurried on about their affairs on Oxford Street, heedless or laughing, preoccupied with the present, oblivious equally of the remote past and remote causes. In those days there were no burned-out, blackened shells of buildings, no pavements strewn with crumbled bricks and crackling glass, no empty blocks without a wall standing. At that time all this rubble and ruin along Oxford Street was as invisible as the Ebro River, which flowed there from July 1936 to March 1939—which still flowed there to-day, still unseen.

I walked on, past the Marble Arch and through the damp, thick leaves of Hyde Park, and far across and up and back again. You could see guns and soldiers in London's parks now, so people knew there was a war. Ask them and they'd tell you—well, ninety-nine out of a hundred would tell you—that the war started in Poland last August. 'Where did the first battle of this war take place?' 'In Poland, of course. . . . What did you say? In Irún? In the Guadarrama mountains? Where are *they*? . . . Oh, you mean to say this war started in Spain? What a peculiar idea, sir! Frightfully sorry, but I don't follow you. After all, that was just a dreadful mess between Spaniards, wasn't it? I mean to say they had a revolution or something, and then later on the Communists and Fascists

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and Nazis muddled in. But what does all that have to do with Hitler invading Poland and this unpleasant business on the western front?' 'Wasn't it in Spain that Hitler first used his air force?' 'Well, I suppose you're right about that, but I still don't see—'

That's just it and that's the trouble, Stowe. How many of you tried to tell them then, while it was happening? They wouldn't see it then, because it was too far away; because there were lots of anarchists in Barcelona and, at the beginning, less than a hundred thousand Communists out of millions and millions of Spaniards of all shades of political opinion on the Republicans' side. Remember when Guernica was blasted from the face of the Basque earth by German bombers in February 1937; how American and British correspondents saw it happen and reported it; and how for months certain people in France, England, and the United States campaigned to convince the public it was just a piece of 'irresponsible journalistic exaggeration'? Maybe the apologists of Franco, Hitler, and Mussolini had better ask the survivors of Warsaw to-day whether Guernica ever happened. Remember how the ill-organized Spanish Loyalists stopped Franco's Insurgents at the very gates of Madrid? That was the Battle of the Marne of this war, but nobody wanted to believe it *then*. Remember the Spanish labourers and toilers of the soil who fought for nearly three years for their Republic and died by the hundreds of thousands while the world looked on? Remember the Aragon peasant who said good-bye to his wife and four small children, and how he looked back from up the road and saw them standing close together, a forlorn little group of forgotten humanity? Remember him, without a gun and without any military training, going to face Nazi-Fascist machine-guns and Nazi-Fascist bombers; and how, looking back, the peasant sighed and said to his companion: 'It is hard to leave them—but there is no other road to freedom.' Then the peasant strode on, towards the front that was yours and mine.

Many people never had the privilege of seeing Madrid in the midsummer of 1937, but you saw it, Stowe. Remember

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the people there, how thin they were and how little they had to eat and the faith that burned in their dark eyes, and how deeply they believed that the outside world—all the democracies—must eventually understand that this was *their* fight; that Franco and Nazism and Fascism were partners and that this partnership was a menace to all free peoples and therefore must never be allowed to conquer. Remember Isabella in the refugee children's colony south of Valencia? Yes, you knew you'd never forget her pale alabaster face and her golden hair and her great brown eyes. She was frail and small for her ten years, and you watched her at her lessons and wanted so terribly for her to smile just once. You went back, but she never smiled. She was from Madrid and some of her eight brothers and sisters were still there. There was one brother with her here, too. The teacher took you upstairs to see him. He was only five and he lay under a sheet. He looked and looked with wide haunted eyes and underneath the coverlet his fingers and his arms twitched all the time. When you went down, the teacher said: 'No, he has no fever. He just has nerves.' And there was Isabella again and you waited—but she never smiled. Back home in America you tried to tell people about Isabella, but a very great many people never listened. They said the Spanish Republicans were all Reds. Some persons tried to get organizations and clubs to cancel your lectures. Some persons tried to get you muzzled on your newspaper. You used to wonder, in those days, why Herbert Hoover never organized a relief fund for the suffering, hungry children of Spain. You wondered about many things. But you learned *how* and *why* people do not see the Ebro flowing down Oxford Street, and you understand now why these strollers in Hyde Park still do not know where the Second World War began.

Why do these slow-going Englishmen think Hitler and the Nazis and the Fascists will be less brutal than they were in Spain?

Oh, you know perfectly well that no one people anywhere has a corner on blindness. You know how many people in the democracies for twenty years have nourished the conviction

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that the only real menace to capitalism is Bolshevism. Hitler could destroy German capitalism before their eyes, but he did it to the slogan of crushing Communism—so they still look to Moscow for their favourite nightmares. At least they did in England until the war came here; and it will be the same with the same kind of people in America. Remember the first time when hundreds of people were killed by bombing? That was in Barcelona, too long ago to matter to many people now. But remember the chap you knew at college, the one who was going to become a minister but didn't, and how he said: 'Well, they can blast Barcelona off the map for all I care. They're just a bunch of Reds anyhow.' Wonder if he feels the same way about Warsaw to-day? Wonder if he'll feel the same way about Paris or London to-morrow? Wonder if he'll ever have enough sense to realize that *he* helped to drop those bombs?

After all, this chap had lots of company in America, in France, in England, in every democratic country. Maybe they never formed the habit of putting two and two together. Probably their lives are too comfortable to bother about digging for the roots of things. Think about all those who shouted warnings about Ethiopia, about Spain, about Hitler and Mussolini. You'd have thought, if people lived closely enough to Hitler and to what he was doing, that they'd begin to see. But they didn't. Remember when you came out of Loyalist Spain in August 1938, and you talked with the French shopkeeper in Perpignan. The Spanish frontier was only a short motor ride from Perpignan. The war had been going on beyond that frontier for two years and Nazi and Fascist pilots had been unloading bombs there during most of that time. 'Aren't you afraid about to-morrow if Franco and his Fascist allies win in Spain?' you asked. But the Frenchman wasn't at all perturbed. 'Oh, they'll never come here. That's just a Spanish mix-up,' he said. You remember how hopeless you felt and how much more hopeless it seemed when you reached Paris, and how much more so when you got home to America.

Here in Hyde Park people know differently now. They carry gas masks every day now, and they go to bed nights wondering if the bombs *will* come here to-morrow. But they

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didn't make that much progress by thinking things through, did they? No, they waited—like the French shopkeeper in Perpignan, until war came and knocked their lives all askew. When hundreds of thousands of Spanish refugees poured out of Catalonia into France it didn't seem to these well-intentioned Englishmen that they had had any share in that catastrophe, nor to well-intentioned Frenchmen or Americans either. Some of them had treated the Nazi-Fascist armed intervention in Spain as simply a natural counterbalance to a fraction of Russians on the other side. Some of them could read about the fall of Barcelona, after weeks of the soul-stirring epic of the Loyalists' defence, and dismiss it as an incident without the slightest relationship to their own little lives. Remember how you sat down at your desk in the city room of your New York newspaper that day and Ed Angly called across: 'Well, what do you think of your team now, ha-ha?' And you answered: 'There's nothing the matter with the team, Ed. It's only some of the people who are in the grandstands.' But most of the people *were* in the grandstands in those days. That was the trouble. From the grandstands, with no worry about food or shelter or entertainment, people could watch Spain and Austria, and later on Czechoslovakia, through a pair of binoculars. From that distance each looked like an isolated incident, unless you happened to be one who sought diligently for facts, for the greatest measure of ascertainable truth—unless you happened to think or to care sufficiently to try to think.

In those days, when men were fighting against colossal odds along the Ebro and Nazi-Fascist planes swarmed over and blasted them with impunity and men were dying day after day, fighting a lost cause that was already two years old but had never been lost by *them*, the Spanish Republicans—in those days a great many good people in France, England, and America skimmed the daily headlines and remarked: 'Isn't it awful about Spain?' But a great many of the 'best' people, in the drawing-rooms of Paris, London, and American cities, breathed easier with each Loyalist defeat. After all, Spain was being saved from Bolshevism, they said. Never mind if

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Spain was being 'saved' by the super-Bolshevists of Berlin and Rome. Never mind if the Spanish Republic had never witnessed a Communist voting strength of two hundred thousand. Never mind if seventy per cent or more of Spain's twenty-five million inhabitants were whole-heartedly Republican and definitely anti-Franco. Never mind if the Republic's land and church reforms had merely endeavoured to break down a medieval feudalistic system and to establish a democratic economic basis of society such as had existed in France and the United States for generations. Virtually all Spanish Republicans had been dubbed 'Reds'; what they tried to do had been branded as 'socialistic'; the Loyalist cause had been painted 'red' by all those who placed property rights above human rights. Spain could fall, and the supposedly democratic leaders of France and Britain would help it fall. They did. Hitler and Mussolini never had more valuable allies.

Remember the clean-cut, clear-eyed colonel of the Republican air force whom you met outside Barcelona that summer; and what he told you about the 130 airplanes, 90 of them pursuit planes, which the French had kept blocked for months just across the Catalonian frontier. The colonel was the greatest Spanish pilot and a Basque Catholic, just as much a Red as Eddie Rickenbacker or Admiral Byrd. 'We have pleaded. We've done everything, but the French won't let those planes through,' he said with a helpless, desperate gesture. 'What would it mean if you had them now?' 'Both our eyes,' replied the colonel. A few months later more than a quarter of a million Spanish refugees poured into France and were locked up behind barbed wire. Victory for Franco, Hitler, and Mussolini had been assured. Remember the thousands of brave men that the French authorities forced back across the border to face Franco's firing squads; and how you read about these things, day after day, with a deep black anger welling up inside you; and how a voice insisted: 'Their turn will come. Never fear, their turn will also come before long. People only learn when it happens to themselves.'

In this same park, over there on the corner by the Marble Arch, plain little Englishmen of both moderate and radical

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shades of political opinion had raised their voices in futile protest. They were nobodies, of course—just some of the simple people who let off steam in Hyde Park on Sundays. They were nobodies, but they were intelligent enough to know what a farce the Chamberlain-Daladier Committee of Non-intervention (in Spain) really was and what its immorality threatened to do to little men and women in every free country. They knew their own government and the Paris government were taking the path to universal disaster. They knew their leaders were dominated by the urge to play it safe, and behind that were dominated by cowardice and blindness. They knew all this, but they couldn't stop the crime of non-intervention. However ill-educated they might be, these common Englishmen bitterly resented the injustice and shortsightedness of a policy which permitted scores of thousands of Fascist soldiers and many thousands of Nazi and Fascist aviators to demolish all possibility of republicanism in Spain. They sensed, if they did not know, the fearful danger behind Hitler's and Mussolini's untrammelled military 'experiments' in Spain. By grace of the British and the French governments millions of brave, poverty-ridden Spaniards were being served up as so many guinea-pigs for Adolf Hitler's Luftwaffe.<sup>1</sup>

Well, the Nazis and the Fascists completed their destruction of the Spanish Republic in March 1939, and now it is

<sup>1</sup> There was no more devoted servant of Prime Minister Chamberlain's policy than Sir Neville Henderson, British Ambassador to Germany throughout these years. In his amazingly revealing book, *The Failure of a Mission*, this is what Sir Neville himself admits regarding the supreme folly of the Chamberlain government's attitude toward the civil war in Spain: 'It is probably true to say that the Spanish war afforded Hitler *just the breathing space* which he required. It preoccupied Europe and thus enabled him surreptitiously to prepare the ground for the prosecution of his wider ambitions. . . . What was even more useful to him was the fact that the conflicting ideologies in that war *split both France and England into mutually hostile factions*. It was these animosities which gave the opportunity, not only of strengthening his external position, but also of forging quietly but steadily ahead with military and air force rearmament.' (Italics mine.)

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only November of the same year and here you sit on a Hyde Park bench, smoking your pipe and looking up at those silver sausages which are supposed to prevent Hitler's Heinkels from pouring death upon London to-day or to-morrow. Certainly the first bombing crews that come over from Germany will be experts who perfected their art over Spanish cities. Wouldn't it be odd if one of those Nazi veterans of the Spanish war should make a direct hit on No. 10 Downing Street? Not very likely to happen. Anyhow Adolf is too smart. But Adolf won't be so careful about the little Englishmen. London's turn is bound to come, and ditto for Paris. And the bombers won't be Soviet bombers and the submarines that go after British merchant ships won't be Russian. Now everybody in England knows it won't be Communism and Bolshevism that threatens to bleed the English people to their knees. Even the most convinced appeasers all know now that you can't appease Hitler and Nazism. Do they yet know that Nazism is Brown Bolshevism? Do they yet see that Nazism uses all the Bolshevist technique, the same kind of boring from within, the same sort of formidable propaganda, the same ruthless variety of terrorism and secret police methods, but uses these things with far more diabolical efficiency than the disciples of Lenin and Stalin have ever achieved? Do they yet understand how devastatingly Nazism seduces capitalists and makes them captives with alluring phrases about 'the Red menace' and then compels them to join in the destruction of their own capitalist system? Do they see these things now? Probably not, my friend; probably not. But they'll learn. Give them time enough and bombs enough and maybe even they will learn. Of course, they're the 'best' people; the very best people in every country, including the United States of America. But you mustn't expect them to see very far beyond the ends of their noses or the size of their pocket-books—not until they lose an awful lot of their noses and pocket-books anyhow. Now they're bound to lose a great deal of both. Maybe those who survive will stumble along through the rubble and desolation of Oxford Street some day and actually see the Ebro River flowing there, muddy and bloody, around crumbled bricks and shat-



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tered granite and twisted broken beams. Maybe they won't call you a Red or a fellow traveller then, Stowe. But what good will that do *them*? Who knows?

So 'you' and Stowe walk home to the St. Regis and the days pass and Mr. Chamberlain is still Prime Minister and there are still no bombs falling on London and very little happens to open the eyes of those who will not see. It is still a phony war and we can't get our teeth into it. I dislike the feeling of it more and more, but November drags on to a close and suddenly something happens on the Russo-Finnish frontier and I am rushing about for an exit permit and all manner of red-tape obligations which must be fulfilled before I can catch a plane for Amsterdam and Stockholm. At last I am ready and a friend says jokingly: 'It's too bad you're not going to a nice quiet place like the French front.' Somebody advises you to be careful about the bombs and you reply: 'Well, at last I'll find out if I can look death in the face and smile.' Perhaps that sounds a little too heroic, but, after all, that's what we were all wondering about. I wanted to know. Somehow it seemed very important that I should know. Millions and millions of people must now discover that, each for himself, and in the composite answer would be found the only hope of salvation for the world in which we live.

## *Chapter 4*

### **'GOOD-BYE TO REASON'—FINLAND**

**W**ear all the clothes you've got, including your pyjamas,' warned Ebbie Monk, the Danish journalist. He had already travelled the two hundred and fifty miles of the Arctic highway's twisting snow corridor, northward to Ivalo and on past Nautsi, to the spot where a few hundred ski-devil Finns had stopped the Russians dead in their tracks and had held them all through December and now through most of January. This Arctic front was many miles south of Petsamo, which the Soviet invaders had seized during the first days of the war. Nevertheless it lay almost exactly along the line of 69 degrees north latitude and that placed it nearly as far into the polar cap as Point Barrow, Alaska. Here in Rovaniemi, capital of Lapland, we were just on the edge of the Arctic Circle, and the temperature averaged lower than 30 degrees below zero. No matter where we went from Rovaniemi, we could rarely keep warm for more than the first half-hour, regardless of how we might dress.

It was two o'clock in the morning. My teeth chattered as I pulled on two suits of double thickness woollen underwear, three pairs of heavy socks, and my heaviest ski pants. I had been lucky enough to find a fine pair of Lapp boots with thin moccasin soles—purposely thin so that the hard ice knocked against the bottom of your feet and kept the blood circulating. Rovaniemi was the only place in Finland now where you could get these boots, because the army had cleaned them out everywhere else. I slid into my woollen shirt, topped it with a thick vest, and then hauled my way inside a roll-neck sweater and a robust lumberjack wind-breaker. After that a knitted balaclava helmet, covering all my head save for a

small circle around the eyes and nose, a round fur cap, and the heavy overcoat which a kind Finnish officer in Helsinki had lent to me, since there were no longer any overcoats to be bought there when I had arrived on the fourth day of the war.

Outside the Hotel Pohjanhovi, once a thriving hostelry for tourists who came to see the midnight sun and now half hospital for the Finnish wounded and half headquarters for war correspondents, our bus was waiting. The polar air bit our faces as we stepped out. It must have been close to forty degrees below. No wonder Desmaitre, our Hungarian-French Don Juan, had had his monocle frozen into his face the week before. We climbed hurriedly into the bus and sat huddled together, two by two. We were ten American, British, and Scandinavian correspondents. Two-thirty in the morning was a ghastly hour to set out in this paralysing cold, but we had to cover all the ground we could before daylight brought the Soviet bombers back again. Fortunately, in this Arctic winter there were still only about five hours of real daylight and it didn't begin until well after nine o'clock. This morning we were not taking the Arctic highway. We were driving directly east to Kemijärvi and then (we hoped) on as far as the north Salla sector—what was known as the Lapland front.

Our bus slid off into the ghostly whiteness and silence of the Arctic night. It had a heater inside, but we sat with overcoat collars pulled high around our heads and soon we were shivering while the familiar icy feeling penetrated boots and socks and two pairs of mittens. The side windows were glazed with frost, but our Finnish chauffeur had an apparatus to keep a clear space on the windshield. Through this we saw the headlights glare on the snow-packed, ice-hardened road. Over the driver's shoulders weird shapes danced like goblins in the headlights, always leaping and twisting and sliding away into black shadows, but always being replaced by other white fir-boned goblins. They danced madly and were dizzying to the eyes as our bus plunged swiftly forward, lurching and careening round the curves. This, I thought, would

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surely be one of my most vivid memories of the Finnish war, these long, freezing, fantastic night rides through the frozen forests and wilderness of Finland—hundreds of miles, shut up in a black little void and hurtling through a vast outer darkness, with the outer darkness only pierced by a slender, swerving, stabbing beam of white, and in this beam a mad, contortional ballet of snow-skirted spruce trees. The ballet danced on and on, ever changing and never ending, catapulted into life and motion by the searching, reaching eyes of our bus, but it was always the panic-like fleeing black shadows that made the spruce trees dance, each for just a few seconds of insane, unreal mobility. It was a ballet of breathless beauty, but the numbing fingers of the frozen north were always clutching at our skins and driving our faces deep into our mufflers and collars until most of those about me either slept or were stiffly motionless, battling speechlessly against the cold.

We rode like that for more than four hours. Then we stopped at the army canteen in Kemijärvi, where we were revived temporarily by hot coffee and oatmeal mush served by the inevitably cheerful, applecheeked Lottas, some of whom were mere girls of seventeen or eighteen. Then we rode on again and spent the daylight's brief hours in a crossroads village, killing time and watching several flights of Russian planes go over. So it was long after dark before we reached the cowshed, in a stand of scrub pines off the North Salla road, where a great, brown-bearded Finnish captain (who closely resembled Stonewall Jackson in appearance) had his headquarters. The cowshed was the only building which the Russians hadn't burned when they rolled through the nearby village more than a month before. But it was finely built, like everything in Finland, and looked more like a summer vacationist's log cabin. The little cook had been married the day before the war began and was the butt of many jokes because he had had to leave his bride so soon, but he served us a huge stew of reindeer meat, which settled soothingly upon our famished stomachs; and after that we asked many questions about the war on the Lapland front.

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Rarely, if ever, in the world's history has there been such an eerie war as this. It is after ten o'clock now and the captain has supplied us with horses and Lapp sleighs to take us up to the front. All about us, as we step outside, hangs the clear, cold, illimitable silence of the northern wilderness. It seems impossible to believe that somewhere, only a few miles up the road, phantomlike shapes are gliding through the forests on deadly missions. No sound of any kind reaches our ears, not so much as the purr of a motor or the crackle of underbrush. Nature has never been more majestic, or her majesty more unbroken, than at this moment, and the poetry of the great outdoors lays a rebuking finger on the murderous moods of man. This is one of those unforgettable nights. A half-moon rises serenely above the tallest spruce on the hill to the south. Our breaths blow smoky white as we climb into the sleighs, and I notice that our stubby horse has that curious yellow mane which I have never seen on horses anywhere in quite the same honey-bright colour except in Finland. Now the runners of our sleigh are squeaking sharply and incongruously in the silent night. We are in the road now and our driver holds his rifle alertly across his knees.

We pass vague circular objects, half mound and half tepee, deep in the pines. Sometimes the light from a fire or a lantern filters through an aperture and is swallowed immediately by intervening snow-weighted branches. Sometimes we see horses standing motionless among the pines and spruces. But there is no human movement here. The sleigh runners squeak in an endless singsong and the harness creaks, but the snow-bound forests are as still as death—as still as the death which somewhere stalks searchingly, hungrily through them. But the heavens are alive with an immeasurable light and beauty. Great opalescent ribbons are unrolling and billowing across the sky. They serpentine hither and yon, obscuring the stars, broadening out into wide, sweeping, magnificent curves and as suddenly contracting into narrow ribbons once more, tapering off into visionless infinity. Of course, they are the northern lights, but it seems that Jupiter is blowing luminous, phosphorescent smoke wreaths from one end of the heavens

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to the other, gently and with a calculated rhythm to suit his imperial whimsies. We slow down for two Finnish soldiers; one is saying to the other: 'To-night they look so hellishly beautiful that you almost have to look at them.'

So we ride on through this white mute wilderness where it seems impossible to conceive of death from anything save the numbing, relentless cold. The Arctic wind sighs softly through the spruce branches as the third mile drops behind us. The half-moon beams like a beacon of peace on earth, and the northern lights writhe and dance across the starry firmament, and the white-garbed spruces stand shoulder to shoulder on either side of the road like an impenetrable wall against the designs and desires of men. Yet here and there we see a motionless white shape which might be a scrub pine or might be—and is—a man. The Russian patrols mine this road whenever they can. These are the sentinels who protect the lives of all who pass this way. They seldom move. On a night like this their feet and hands must be freezing, but even as we pass within thirty feet of them they do not move. They are one with the frozen landscape.

We come to the place where a tiny path leads into the forest. The tent of the Finnish advance guard, snugly built around the trunk of a small spruce, is less than twenty yards away; but the snow has camouflaged it completely and it has been constructed with such consummate skill that we do not see it until we are almost upon it. Inside, eighteen soldiers are stretched out on straw, snugly warm, around a tiny red-hot stove. A lieutenant tells us: 'It isn't cold to-night; it is only thirty degrees below.' . . . Farther up the road there is a pine ridge, and the moonlight casts zebra stripes across the snow. The Russian advance posts are only a few hundred yards beyond. It is breathlessly silent and we still hear no sound, when suddenly a dozen white figures sweep across the crest of the hill to our left, where the road dips down across the bridge. They dig their ski sticks into the tight hard snow and slide into formation, Indian file. Each wears a pair of Turkish-like white over-pants, a white cape, and a white hood. Each carries a rifle slung across his back and a Finnish pukko (knife)

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at his belt. They wait for a moment. Then a low word of command and they glide like ghosts down the slope and across the bridge. They slide swiftly, noiselessly past us and down, and as they pass I notice with amusement that the last soldier in the line holds a half-smoked cigar clenched in his teeth. There is something marvellously Finnish about that. They are going through the trackless forests. They may be trapped by a Red army patrol. Some of them may not come back. But as you watch them fade like phantoms and disappear into the stilly, crystalline forest you know that no men anywhere have ever fought with greater courage and that no men of any century have ever fought in these Arctic wildernesses with such amazing skill. These men on skis are the Daniel Boones of the twentieth century. They know as much about the forests and the mysteries and cruel laws of nature as Daniel Boone ever knew, yet they fight with machine-guns and hand-grenades as well as with knives—and always with their wits and with the weapons of pioneers. These are the Davids of Finland, and the Soviet Goliath of all the Russians has proved utterly incapable of kindling fear in their hearts. In two short months they have thrown back the Red army's divisions, have outfought them, outgeneralled them and outmanœuvred them. They have destroyed several Russian divisions, including those brave and innocent thousands of peasants whose twisted, gesticulating bodies I have seen in the vast solitude of the frozen forest of the dead at Tolvajärvi, north of Lake Ladoga.

Yes, this is war in all its stark, terrible reality. On that early December day when I rushed desperately across Holland and Denmark toward Helsinki, no supposedly sane person believed that the Finns had a chance. Standing here on the pine ridge you watch a Finnish ski patrol glide boldly out into the silent, ice-fanged wilderness and you feel a warm, deep pride, as if these men were your own people. You know that no people on earth could be braver or stronger or more gallant than they are. You think of the terribly wounded young soldier in a hospital train behind the Taipale front on the Karelian isthmus; how his fists were clenched and teeth

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gritted and beads of sweat swelled out on his forehead as he writhed, silently, in an agony of pain. 'Cry a little,' said the Finnish nurse. 'Just cry a little.' Then at last the words came from the young Finn's lips: 'Cry? Cry? The Russians cry!' His fists were still clenched and his teeth still gritted. He did not cry. He was a Finn.

You ride back beneath the northern lights, along the road which the Russian patrols haven't mined (but did mine in five different places about an hour later that night), and you pass strange snow-covered pillars which look like totem poles or perhaps the ruins of an ancient Grecian city. They are stone chimneys, all that remains of Finnish farmhouses which were burned when the Russians came. The silent naked columns, so completely out of scene in this virginal wilderness, remind you of hundreds of other farmhouses which were burned to the ground by their Finnish owners down on the Karelian isthmus—burned rather than allow the enemy to profit by their use. That calls to mind once more the young Finnish woman, newly married, who placed a torch to the house of her dreams with its hope-chest and its hand-embroidered linens and all the precious things which she and her bridegroom had worked for and saved for over several long, hard years, 'Yes, they have taken everything,' said the Finnish bride. 'But we still have our earth. After the war we will build it all again.'

In the Finnish spirit there is something unconquerable and unbreakable, something as stern and unyielding as the Arctic winter itself. Coming back from Viipuri, Webb Miller told us about the first Russian shelling of that seaport city of seventy thousand on the upper isthmus. Some of the shells exploded so near to the Knut Posse hotel that they rocked the building. Two maids were busy in Webb's room when the first shells broke. 'The Russians are just getting a little experience at shooting,' one of the maids remarked calmly. Then the two women went on with their work. It was like that, too, when the air alarm sounded in Helsinki. When I lived in the Hotel Kamp our stout, middle-aged chambermaid had to run from door to door warning everyone to go



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down into what passed for a shelter. She used to come in, gasping for breath, but with blazing eyes, and stamp her feet with rage—usually half-articulate rage because she rarely had enough breath left to do more than snort: 'Those Russians—those pigs!' But Clara, over at the Societetshuset, possessed the deadly, ice-cake calm of the typical Finn and with that a dash of humour which was quite unusual in her race. When the sirens began shrieking, Clara would march primly into my room and sing out in pleasant, musically accented English: 'Molo-tov is here!' Clara had a magnificent scorn of Molotov and all his works, but when you saw Clara's lips set in a hard straight line and when you saw a certain cold flame in her eyes, you knew all you would ever need to know about the immalleable steel out of which Finnish men and women are made. We correspondents made it a rule not to stop our work and go downstairs during the air alarms, much to the concern of the motherly, elderly Lotta who presided at the Sausage House (more properly known as the Societetshuset). But Clara always understood. 'Molotov is here!' was merely a formality for her.

All these things were part of the Finnish spirit and character, yet they alone could not explain the miracles which the little Finnish army of not much more than three hundred thousand had performed in the face of devastating, heart-breaking odds. What was the secret of the Finns' resistance? What had enabled them to astound the world? By January 1940 we had seen enough to know that Finnish courage and the outdoor pioneering skill of the Finns had played a most important role in successive military triumphs on an almost incredible scale. But other elements were also involved, and among these, three were of decisive significance: (1) the determination of all Finns to fight, regardless of their losses and regardless of the cost; (2) the remarkable unity of Finns of all parties, from extreme conservatives on the Right to the Socialist masses on the Left; (3) the extraordinary and unprecedentedly active role which Finnish women played in their nation's fight for existence.

We had seen a government exercising complete team work

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with a banker and a champion of capitalism (Ryti) as Premier, and a lifelong Socialist leader (Tanner) as Foreign Minister. Men of all Finnish parties united and worked heroically in the common cause. There were rich men, industrialists and others, among the Finns. When war came they knew the Red army could be expected to conquer Finland quite swiftly, and they knew that every dollar they had safely tucked in Helsinki's banks would soon be worth no more than fifteen or twenty cents. These men could have smuggled large personal fortunes out of the country before Stalin struck. They had every warning and opportunity to run to cover. I never heard of one wealthy Finn who did so. They kept their money inside Finland and used it generously to help to purchase arms with which to defend their country. On the Left were Finnish workers, overwhelmingly Socialists, and some of them had even fought with the Reds against the Whites in the civil war of 1919. Nevertheless Finland's Socialists remained just as devoted to the Finnish Republic as their brother Socialists in Spain had been to the Spanish Republic. Powerful co-operatives flourished in Finland, yet capitalistic enterprise had not been undermined. The state itself owned one-third of the forests, yet democratic processes functioned here to an exceptional degree. Without sacrificing their belief in trade unions the Finnish workers of the Left gave their unqualified support to their nation's defence. In fact, their support was indispensable. Without the Socialists (the same kind of labour unionists whom so many, wittingly or unwittingly, dismissed as 'Reds' in Spain) Finland would have been doomed at the beginning and Stalin would have had an easy victory. In Finland it was chiefly Socialist man-power that repeatedly repulsed the Red army, but the economic and military leadership came from the political Right wing. Finnish conservatives showed themselves both intelligent and enlightened—and also democratic. That was what made Finnish unity an inspiring reality.

But the Finnish women were a unique factor and most surprising of all. Their Lotta organization had been founded with the Republic, and for twenty years girls from the age of

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ten and women up to the age of sixty had been trained for a wide variety of war-time services. There were Lotta nurses, Lotta supply units, Lotta fire wardens, Lotta canteen workers, and Lottas of a dozen more varieties. Some of them had served as cooks at the regular army manoeuvres for years and we found them performing the army's kitchen duties, quietly and smilingly, close to every front. Many other young Finnish Lottas, some in their late teens, served as air wardens on the top of water towers and buildings and spent hours at a time watching for Russian planes while exposed to paralysing temperatures of twenty-five or thirty-five degrees below zero. Some of them, too numbed to climb down safely, crashed to their deaths. Everywhere we went these magnificent Finnish women gave examples of the greatest fortitude and devotion. They served as volunteers and received no pay whatsoever. They were wonderfully efficient and completely Finnish in their perfect discipline and love for their country. All of us who came as war correspondents to Finland marvelled continually at the Lottas and their work. Every Finnish male was needed with the armed services. Without thought of praise and with the naturalness of pioneer wives and daughters the Finnish women took over men's jobs, thereby releasing tens of thousands of men for active fighting. I am quite certain that no war—certainly no modern war—has ever been fought, in which women have contributed so widely and effectively to a nation's defence as in Finland. In this sense I can think of no other people who have ever fought so completely as a people. Hitler's Nazis—even they—have never organized German women on such an efficient basis; but the Finns did this democratically and of their own volition. Women the world over must look to Finnish women for the supreme lesson in practical patriotism.

This kind of national unity and this kind of selflessness and flaming courage gave the Finnish war a deep spiritual quality to which the most sceptical foreign observer could not possibly remain indifferent. As such people fight for their existence you cannot live with them without hoping and praying that somehow they may win. Yet we all knew that Soviet

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Russia's colossal superiority in man-power, airplanes, tanks, and artillery made victory for Finland almost inconceivable—virtually impossible without immediate and very considerable foreign aid. The Finns knew this too, but that could not keep them from fighting. They exist to-day as a people only because they fought the Russian invaders generation after generation and century after century. Now they were only 3,500,000 against 180,000,000—but they fought just the same. And when they decided to fight, the Finns did not possess a single aircraft factory or any possibility of building one. They went to war with an air force of exactly ninety-seven planes and knowing that the Soviets had thousands of airplanes. If there had been a Charles A. Lindbergh in Finland, he would have insisted that resistance was sheer folly, but that kind of rationalism has no slightest relationship to the Finns. Nor is it an accident that the Finns have a toast which I think is the most appropriate I have ever heard. Webb Miller had chosen it as the title for a prospective book and then, after safely reporting eleven wars, Webb fell to his death in a perfectly simple London train accident (through a circumstance which, I happen to know, was as purely accidental as slipping on ice), and America lost one of the most authoritative, conscientious, and lovable war correspondents we have ever had. The Finnish toast which Webb delighted in having discovered was *Tolkku Pois*, pronounced *Tolk-ku Po-eece*. It means 'Good-bye to Reason'.

Watching the gallant one-sided struggle of the Finns, I was constantly reminded of contrasts and parallels with the Spanish war. In my journal that December I wrote: 'The Finns have plenty of food <sup>1</sup> and organized and highly literate people, large numbers of excellent experienced officers—all things which the Spanish Republicans sadly lacked. But the Finns are also tragically inferior in all war materials, and, like the Spaniards, they look most earnestly for real aid from

<sup>1</sup> There was much less when peace came in March, and to-day Finland is probably nearer to starvation than any other European country except Spain, where hundreds of thousands are actually starving.

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the democracies—aid which will probably never be what they hope for and, for what it's worth, is likely to come too late. In talking with people here, on the streets or in the barber shop or with the barmaids at the Adlon restaurant, they invariably express the belief that surely someone—Sweden, England, or America—will come to help them. 'Surely the democracies can't stand aside and let us be destroyed by Russia and enslaved by Bolshevism,' they say. It sounds just like the desperate faith and hope of the Spanish Loyalists when they said, again and again: 'The democracies can't fail to see that Spain is the place to stop Nazism and Fascism, once and for all, before it is too late.' After having seen what happened to the Spaniards, how can one offer any hope to the Finns?

'Of course, a good many Finns swallowed all the Franco propaganda about Republican Spain being full of legions of Communist soldiers and a Red menace. When I told Miss Winge, a Lotta in Stockmann's, that I had never seen a single company of Russian troops in Spain, she was amazed. 'Do you know that Tanner, your Foreign Minister, would have been shot by Franco as a "Red criminal" simply because he's a Socialist? . . .' 'But that is simply awful,' exclaimed Miss Winge, horrified. Now it is ironic to hear how ardently pro-Finnish General Franco's American champions have become. They denounced all Socialists (the largest party in Spain), yet they defend Finland, whose parliament has a big Socialist majority, whose state owns one-third of all the country's forests and is part owner of many of the nation's power stations, and whose hundreds of co-operatives were established through socialistic legislation. If these things were true of New York or Wisconsin these same Americans would regard those states as menaces to our capitalistic system. It's wonderful how a liberal-economic democracy looks Red near home, but arouses great enthusiasm among reactionaries when it stands up and fights against Stalinism. It's equally amusing, here in Helsinki, to find the Italian Fascists (including some who were on Franco's side in Spain) most warmly supporting a liberal socialistic democracy like Finland.'

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But cheers and laudatory speeches, whether from Italians, Frenchmen, Englishmen, or Americans, would never supply Finnish soldiers with machine-guns or Finnish artillery with shells or Finnish pilots with fighter planes. The first two months of the war, December and January, gave the democratic governments their great opportunity for swift and immediate action; but aside from the Scandinavians, and particularly Sweden, this opportunity was drowned in columns of editorials about the 'magnificent Finns' and in gales of empty rhetoric. The Swedes, who were closest, possessed material things and their contributions of material things were of enormous help to hard-pressed Finland. Sweden adopted a policy of 'all aid short of war', and short of war her people and government provided aid with great generosity.<sup>1</sup> About eight thousand Swedish volunteers, led by Swedish officers, also enlisted in the Finnish army, bringing their own Swedish-bought equipment with them. Unfortunately, the Swedish-Danish-Norwegian volunteers were not able to take over the Salla sector in Lapland until the last weeks of the war, and therefore did not have an opportunity (on that comparatively quiet front) to participate in any decisive fighting. In any case the struggle on the Karelian isthmus had already reached a stage where a few thousand volunteers could not possibly stem the Russian tide. Only two or three divisions of professional soldiers, some forty thousand trained men or more, could have saved the Mannerheim Line. In mid-February the Finnish government, with the Mannerheim defences crumbling at last, asked Sweden to send two army divisions, but the request was refused in Stockholm. The

<sup>1</sup> According to official Swedish statistics, released after the Finnish war, Sweden 'during and after' the conflict sent to Finland 90,000 rifles and light machine-guns, 42,000,000 rounds of ammunition, 75 anti-tank guns, and 150 other guns of all calibres. What proportion of this material reached Finland while hostilities were still on is not clear from the figures supplied to me by the Swedish Minister in Washington, but the amount was considerable. Donations to Finland in cash and kind from the Swedes attained the remarkable total of 145,629,000 kroner, or approximately \$36,000,000 (or £9,000,000).

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Swedish government feared what Germany might do. It was not prepared to risk resorting to the ruse which the Nazi-Fascists had used so successfully in Spain and blanket two army divisions with the camouflage status of 'volunteers'.

In any event the Anglo-French Allies and America failed utterly to act swiftly and to send any kind of adequate and effective aid to Finland. During the first two months two hundred airplanes would have saved invaluable war *matériel* from destruction by bombing, but such planes as the democracies sent were very few and characteristically late. As for Americans, they were holding mass meetings, collecting old clothes, and knitting socks just as some of them had done for Spain. Now they gave more and did more (the cause being more clearly defined and much less embarrassing), but it was done with the same old American missionary spirit. The only thing that would keep increasing tens of thousands of Finnish children from homelessness and hunger was the airplane, so Americans sent them shiploads of sweaters and socks. Suddenly former President Herbert Hoover became interested in war refugees once more and sent personal representatives to Finland. One night Mr. Hoover's latest emissary was introduced to Marthe Huysmans, the indomitable little Belgian Socialist journalist who had seen Spain through to its bitter end and was one of the keenest war correspondents in Finland. 'How do you do?' said Marthe to Mr. Hoover's representative. 'I waited for you two years in Spain.' That seemed to be all there was to be said on that subject. Maybe Isabella of the alabaster face would be old enough almost to smile at that remark now, if she escaped from being buried under brick and stone by Mussolini's bombers. In those days the Spanish Republic might have been saved—if President Roosevelt had boldly asked for the repeal or amendment of our Neutrality Act and if American politicians had fought to support the one step which would have given Spanish republicans arms with which to fight. With much less excuse, in February 1940, our Congress was not even willing to grant a loan to the Finns without specifying that the money should not be used for the only essentials for lack of which Finns were

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dying. If the Scandinavians were to be criticized for their neutrality and 'all aid short of war', what could one say about the American people? Our own attitude boiled down to good intentions and sheer sentimentality. The British and French, as events proved, were quite as ineffectual.

Meanwhile those of us who had been labelled 'Reds' for our support of democracy in Spain were now being denounced with equal bitterness by Communists and fellow travellers in the United States for our dispatches from Finland. I had seen the first miserable, bootless, thinly clad Russian prisoners in two different front sectors and had faithfully reported what they wore and what they said. I had seen the frozen remnants of the Red army divisions which were cut to pieces at Tolvajärvi, nearly seventy shattered Russian tanks, and quantities of *matériel* captured by the Finns—and had reported what I had seen. This was enough to make me a reactionary in the eyes of American Left-wing extremists whereas, only a year or two before, the Brooklyn *Tablet* had persistently attacked me as either a 'fellow traveller' or a 'Red sympathizer' or some sort of an instrument of Moscow. Now, quite as fantastically, I had become an enemy of 'Soviet democracy' and the peace-loving Kremlin. I had always believed in the principle of trade unions and still did, but the truth about Russia's war on Finland was sufficient to cause American radicals to condemn me as an enemy of the working people. All this, of course, was only what any liberal-minded democrat must expect from both Left-wing radicals and Right-wing reactionaries in times like ours. It didn't matter particularly to me what they said. I had a job of reporting to do and I was doing it to the best of my ability. George Seldes might write a series of articles for the *New Masses* purporting to show that the Soviets had never bombed civilian populations in Finland. I had lain in the snow and watched Russian bombs coming down at me when I was nearly one mile away from the only legitimate target anywhere around. I had talked with passengers whose train had been machine-gunned on the Turku-Helsinki line. I had been in bombed Finnish towns and villages. What Soviet bombers



had done to Finnish civilians had differed in degree from what Nazi-Fascist bombers had done to Spanish civilians, but in brutality and scorn of human suffering no valid distinctions could possibly be drawn.

After a brief breathing-spell in Stockholm I returned to Helsinki on February 12. Things were now going very badly for the Finns. The great Russian offensive on the Karelian isthmus had been under way for twelve days. The Red army had driven a dangerous spearhead forward and taken Summa against heartbreaking Finnish resistance. The Russians had brought up hundreds of 155's, and these six-inch guns, with their longer range, simply battered the Finns' artillery emplacements to pieces while the Finnish shells could not reach them. It was the turning-point of the war and the beginning of the end. Two nights later I walked home with Ilta Helsingius, a splendid young woman who operated the press bureau in the Kamp with Captain Zilliacus. Like everyone in Helsinki, worn down by complete lack of fruits and salads and by the unbroken strain of eighteen-hour days and by the terrific brunt of this coldest Finnish winter in sixty years, her face was drawn and colourless now. She had always been undaunted, like all the lion-hearted Finns. Now for the first time Miss Helsingius was depressed and anxious. As I said good-night she begged me: 'Please, can't you write something to get help quickly? It is getting very bad now. We are losing so many of our best men.' The next day I learned that the lake quadrangle in the centre of the isthmus had been pierced by the sheer crushing might of Russian guns and men. That meant that the backbone of the Mannerheim Line was broken. No one but the democratic nations in the grandstand could now save Finland. The next day Sweden refused the Finns' appeal for two army divisions. Save for a miracle from somewhere outside, it would not be long now.

My Finnish notebook (providentially sent out of Belgrade before Belgrade was destroyed) reminds me of a number of interesting things which otherwise would have been forgotten. On the same day that the backbone of the Mannerheim Line was shattered, the British government in London

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officially announced that 'the law of 1870 forbidding British subjects to take up arms for a foreign power has been repealed' and a general licence had been granted for British citizens to enrol as volunteers in the Finnish army. Here at last was old Creeping-Paralysis up and active—hobbling frantically toward a five-alarm fire with a teacupful of water. London also stated 'it should not cause surprise' if Polish soldiers, then in France, should choose to leave their own army and volunteer in Finland. But the Finns needed men, tens of thousands of men, that very day and hour. For the first time Field-Marshal Mannerheim addressed an order of the day to his tiny army: 'Soldiers. The moment has arrived to stop the enemy's attacks . . .' But with what? With shells and guns and planes from where? The Russian air assaults upon railroad lines, stations, factories, and all supply roads to the front had become devastatingly vicious now, as we learned while spending forty-five hours to complete what was normally a nine-hour train journey from Helsinki to Sortavala on Lake Ladoga. Captain Bob Losey, our American air attaché, was an exceptionally efficient and conscientious officer and probably the best-informed aviation observer in Finland. Only a little later he died in line of duty, killed by a Nazi bomb fragment while covering the German invasion of Norway, and America lost a man whom she could not afford to lose. Captain Losey knew what hundreds of Russian bombers, day after day, were doing to Finnish communications and munition supplies. 'The Russians' bombing efficiency has improved such a hell of a lot there's something fishy about it,' Bob said. But he admitted he had never obtained any proof that Nazis were flying Soviet planes and he was strongly inclined to doubt that recurrent rumour. Later, when the end was very near, I questioned the shrewd French military attaché about the reports that the Russians had been assisted by German technicians. He laughed dryly. 'That was a good canard,' he confessed. 'I launched it myself on 15 February in an effort to wake up my government and public opinion. I captured a German prisoner.' He was the only person I ever met in Finland who did capture one, and his lone

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'prisoner' was 'captured' much too late to serve any political purpose.

Now it was March and the whole western flank of the Mannerheim Line was crumbling and the Russians, having taken Koivisto and the adjacent islands, were pushing across the ice of Viipuri Bay. That would outflank the shortened isthmus line completely and Finnish resistance would soon be doomed. If only the ice would break up, the Finns would be saved for a while longer. Usually the ice in the bay was already broken, but this damnable super-Arctic winter at last dealt a blow to the Finns. The French military attaché was wry-faced but incurably whimsical. 'One of three things,' he said. 'Either the *bon Dieu* is getting weak and can't control the weather; or the *bon Dieu* has become a Fascist; or there is no God.' I wonder now what he must have thought about that when June came in France.

In any case it was March and Finland's magnificent epic was now reduced to nothing more than hope, and what were the Anglo-French Allies doing? Actually, they were still *saying*. In Helsinki on 4 March the tormented Finns could take such comfort as was possible from an editorial in *Le Temps* which declared: 'France and Britain, to win the great war, must effectively help Finland without allowing themselves to become involved in diplomatic hair-splitting or illusory neutralities.' The next day the London *Times* trumpeted: 'It is becoming clearer every day that this [Finnish] war is no side issue. . . . Our interest is clear. The whole sentiment of this country demands that Finland should not be allowed to fall.' The next day, 6 March, we heard the first rumours of peace negotiations being under way. It was 'becoming clearer every day' that the end was at hand and that the British and French might possibly wake up in time to attend the funeral. They had debated the possibility of sending an Anglo-French expeditionary force to Finland, but Norway and Sweden would not consent to relax their neutrality sufficiently to permit passage of Allied troops. Meanwhile it had 'become clearer every day' for three months that the London and Paris governments were fumbling and wasting time as usual. They had

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done nothing with urgent speed and they had shipped no weapons in quantity. Clearly they had no right to claim that they were not informed or that there had not been time in which to act. The criminal negligence of all democracies in regard to Finland had been even more inexcusable than in regard to Republican Spain.

Now another fateful March had come. On 11-12 March 1938 Hitler's troops had occupied Austria. On 15 March 1939 Nazi divisions swallowed up Czechoslovakia. On the 29th and 30th of that same March Blackshirt and Fascist divisions and Nazi aviation forces marched into Madrid with the Franco army which had been powerless to take Madrid alone. Now another 12th of March had dawned and Premier Ryti and his Finnish delegation were in Moscow, signing a peace dictated by Joseph Stalin from the Kremlin. In Helsinki we didn't know yet that it had happened. As war correspondents we knew the end was coming any hour now, but the Finnish people had no idea that conditions were so grave. They had never been told of the seriousness of the battles at Summa and Muolaa. Even yesterday Helsinki newspapers had been insisting that 'nothing has yet been altered, despite the trip to Moscow', and 'our army has not yet suffered a single big defeat'. They did not know that Field-Marshal Mannerheim, knowing full well the desperate situation of the Finnish forces on the mainland west of Viipuri and on the isthmus and knowing that a final catastrophic collapse might come within a week, had urged the Helsinki government to conclude peace immediately—with the utmost speed—and to accept whatever terms they could get. Mannerheim was thinking about to-morrow. At all costs he was intent upon preserving intact his wonderful little army of three hundred thousand, the army which Webb Miller had declared contained the highest per capita average of soldierly efficiency that he had seen anywhere through eleven wars. Mannerheim, the wise old warrior, had his heart set upon saving the Finnish armed forces so they could give serious pause to the Red Russian bear while Finland was striving to stop her wounds.

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That was statesmanlike common sense, but the Finnish people did not know these things or even that the Russians already had more than one full division across the ice of Viipuri Bay. For the sake of internal morale their leaders had never prepared them for the shock of peace negotiations, let alone a cruel and amputating dictated peace. The combative spirit of the Finns was still unshattered. But the people behind the lines, in cities and towns, could not have the slightest conception of the unspeakable punishment which their soldiers had taken for six long weeks, nor of the superhuman endurance which they had shown against constantly fresh divisions of Russians. Foreign military observers, veterans of the World War, later told us that Finnish soldiers on the isthmus had fought virtually without sleep for the past month and that they had endured for more than three weeks what men at Verdun had never been asked to endure for more than four days at a stretch. Only the incredible physique of the Finns, truly men of iron and steel, made this kind of superhuman resistance possible. Nevertheless, the Finnish people did not know these things.

That night, up in Walter Kerr's room at the Kamp, we finally learned that the Moscow radio had announced the peace, but we still couldn't write about it. There was no confirmation from Finnish official quarters as yet. It was 1.45 a.m. By now our nerves had been stretched almost to the limit. The telephone connections with Amsterdam would not come through, Geoffrey Cox of the *Daily Express* was pounding feverishly at his typewriter, tearing out one lead and throwing it away and beginning another. 'What are you writing—your memoirs, Cox?' asked Walter. We tried to cover the heartbreak of it all with feeble jokes. They fell as flat as when poor ashen-faced Zilliacus, commenting on Walter's futile struggles with the telephone, had remarked: 'Probably you forgot to put your nickel in the slot.' We kept writing stories that we couldn't file. All that Captain Zilliacus could say was: 'It's possible that peace terms have been signed in Moscow, but I presume our parliament has not yet voted on them. Otherwise we should have heard.' Then the

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phone rang and a Finnish friend was called. He laid down the receiver and said in a dull voice: 'The first of our friends has just committed suicide.' It was a young woman, a writer by profession.

That same morning after daybreak (13 March) everyone in Finland knew the worst and we saw the stony unbelief and then the terrible unuttered grief in the faces of men and women on Helsinki's snow-packed streets. There were no air alarms now. I had warned Clara that peace was coming and she had cried: 'No, no!' And then fiercely: 'But we'll fight if we have nothing but our knives. . . . Hango? They will take Hango? I tell you our children and our grandchildren would fight to take Hango back. No, they can never do that to us.' Now Clara's lips were set and her eyes were hard and she did not speak at all. But even the amazing stoicism of most Finns had been shattered at last.

In those first hours of bitterness and black despair I talked with a Finnish newspaperman. 'For what?' he said. 'All those men who died—for what? Think of the families who burned their homes and did it gladly for their country. For what? Did they have to make peace? I don't believe it. . . . The Finns will never forgive this betrayal, but they'll be finished. They'll never fight again. In one year there will be nothing left in this country. Finland is finished—and for what?'

That was the first torrential outpouring of indignation and grief from a people bred through centuries to keep their emotions anchored deep within themselves. For that reason it was overstatement, too. None of us who had come to know the Finns could ever doubt that they would fight again. They are that kind of people. Whenever the independence of their beautiful land of spruce forests and white birches and rolling countryside and turquoise lakes is at stake they will always fight.

On this same morning of 13 March, a battalion commander on the broken front north of Viipuri went to his colonel and asked for munitions.

'We haven't any,' said the colonel.

'Then how are we going to resist?'

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**'Very simple. You won't be able to resist.'**

So the Finnish battalion retired, staggering from exhaustion, before Russian troops who fired and sang as they advanced. In another sector the Finnish soldiers had had nothing to eat for three days. On the previous evening their officers ordered them to withdraw without maintaining contact with the enemy. Was it a strategic retreat? Or a manoeuvre? Each soldier had only five cartridges left, yet the idea that the withdrawal could mean peace never entered their minds. At eleven o'clock the order to cease firing was given along the entire front. Finnish soldiers who could scarcely stand received it first with astonished disbelief and then with bitter cries of protest. 'To hell with it all! It would be better to go on.' Without munitions, without artillery, without airplanes, the Finns asked nothing except to fight on. In their hearts they were never defeated, and in their hearts, O ye of little faith, they never will be.

In the press room little Vera, pale but efficient to the last, was saying: 'You'll never see another war like this, Mr. Beattie.'

'I hope I'll never see another war that's given away before it's lost,' Ed said grimly.

'You will all be going away now,' Vera said. 'Like people leaving a sinking ship.'

It was too terribly true. We were war correspondents and we would have to go away, leaving the Finns to live in the poverty and hunger which was the measure of their eternal glory. It was after eleven o'clock and the strange, almost forgotten silence that is called peace had settled over all Finland. Another hour and Foreign Minister Tanner, speaking by radio, was explaining why it had to be. I sat in one of the largest co-operative restaurants in Helsinki and listened. All around me men and women waited, their faces stony, like people awaiting the pronouncement of a death sentence. Tanner's voice was steady and emotionless, supremely Finnish in its self-control. 'We were compelled to accept peace,' he said. A dark-haired young woman near the window began to weep silently, hiding her face with her hands. On all sides

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of me other faces stared, never registering so much as a twitch of the features. Tanner's voice went steadily on. He was enumerating the Soviet conditions. 'My God!' exclaimed an English-speaking girl across the table. A grey-haired woman winced and began to rub the tears from her eyes. The faces of two Finnish officers were as expressionless and impenetrable as those of Indians.

'In ten days we shall give up Hango.'

The words came like the echo of doom. Two more women were crying, but without making a sound. The officers' faces still revealed nothing of what was happening inside them. Tanner was explaining how foreign help had failed to come in sufficient strength and in time; how the Scandinavian governments had refused passage for British and French troops. My eyes were drawn back to the young woman by the window. Now she lay limp in her chair, her face averted toward the drawn curtains. Her shoulders were shaking slowly and ceaselessly. . . . Tanner was saying: 'We must start our lives again. We are going to rise again.' All about me the stony eyes and faces remained unchanged; everywhere the baffling Spartan armour of this far northern race of little giants. It was soon ended. The strains of the hymn *God is Our Fortress* poured from the microphone. Men and women stood until the last note died away. Not a soul spoke. Silently they walked out, carrying with them the numb, proud solitude of their grief. The war was over.

Now the widows and mothers and sisters of those who had died would dress in black. Until now they had never worn mourning dress. That would have given some indication of the heavy losses which the Finnish army had sustained. Until the Red army started its February offensive, Finnish losses had been remarkably low, but during the final month they mounted drastically. We had great difficulty in obtaining accurate figures. A very high-placed Finnish official gave me the following: killed, over 15,700; seriously wounded, 12,500; missing, 1,500; a total of 29,700 in dead, missing, and badly wounded. He put the grand total of casualties of all categories at 56,000 among the men, plus, 2,500 officers. The same



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official said that two Swedish volunteers had been killed. (This was an understandably low figure because almost the only Scandinavian volunteers to participate in severe fighting in Finland were those who came as aviators. They saw plenty of action against terrific odds and did heroic work. The infantry volunteers in the Scandinavian corps had not yet been hardened by front-line service on a tough front when the conflict ended.) Our U.S. military attaché, Major Hufsteiner, took account of the Finnish authorities' tendency to keep the figure for dead and seriously wounded as low as possible; and like ourselves, he didn't fail to notice that Field-Marshal Mannerheim had carefully described the number of dead as 'more than' 15,000. The major estimated total Finnish casualties of all kinds at a minimum of 65,000 and possibly as many as 80,000. In any case he believed the losses represented thirty per cent or more of the small Finnish army—a blow so devastating and a bleeding-white process so weakening that Mannerheim's counsels for immediate peace were justified a hundredfold. Foreign military attachés in Finland agreed that Russian losses were at least four or five times greater than the Finns' and, given the Soviet command's habit of throwing vast masses of men against every objective regardless of the cost, were possibly six or eight times as great. On the day that peace came several of us were speculating about what foreign government would now get the inside track in Finland. 'We do,' confidently announced the young correspondent of D.N.B., the Nazis' official news agency. 'We're the ones who are going to do all the business up here now.' He and his fellow Nazis had been celebrating the alleged Soviet victory far into the morning with champagne. That was one more heartache for a pretty Finnish Lotta who liked him too much.

Now it was the first day of peace and all the white-and-blue flags in Helsinki were hanging at half-mast and the sun was shining far too brightly. Already grey-faced old men and boys were prying the boards from shop windows which had been protectively obliterated for three and a half months. They threw the boards down on the pavements, methodically,

listlessly, with much the same motion that a man would pile earth over the coffin of his wife or child. The Finns who passed on the streets spoke very little. Most of their faces were still masks, but some of them were too tight and a few told everything. It was all over. I went upstairs in the Hotel Kamp and came upon Olga, the stout elderly chambermaid who had so often greeted us with gay laughter and had never shown fear during the air alarms. She was leaning against the banister. I had never seen lines of old age in her face before. Now it seemed as if all strength and desire had left her body. Her red-rimmed eyes were staring dully down at the carpet. She did not see me. She saw nothing—and she saw everything. There was nothing I could say.

I went down the stairs again and managed to crowd into the second-floor press room where the radio was set up. President Kallio would soon be giving his message to the Finnish people, and perhaps forty newspapermen were gathered here to listen. I saw the harrowed, pallid faces of Captain Zilliacus and Ilta Helsingius. All through these weeks they had been as magnificent as human beings can ever be, but we had seen the agony in their eyes deepen and grow through these last days when peace became a menace and then a terrible reality. We had seen Lauren Zilliacus and Ilta and Vera work on and on, fighting to hold back the tears and fighting to keep their lips from trembling. For many long hours now they had been on the verge of collapse. If the thin wire snapped, one of them might press a trigger. But no—they were all Finns. They would win the last victory at whatever cost. I stood back in one corner. Up to the moment the radio went on, the fellows kept Zilliacus and Ilta busy with all kinds of questions. Their faces were almost white with pallor and their voices came mechanically, low and expressionless—the kind of voices you hear at a funeral. Then President Kallio began speaking. Captain Zilliacus stood at attention and beside him stood Ilta, always womanly and lovely and now more so than ever. Both held their heads high. I looked away and then I had to look back again. Would they break down? No, they wouldn't break down. The face of

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Zilliacus was drained of all colour, a deathly marble hue, and absolutely motionless. His eyes stared straight across the room at the wall. Once the muscles of his throat moved, but that was all. Ilta, too, stared straight into space and her lips never trembled. Here, in these two faces, were such sorrow and dignity and self-control as can ever be known. Now the rich music of the Finnish national anthem filled the room. I could not look at the faces of these friends again and trust my own emotions. They were stronger, much stronger than I. Suddenly I couldn't stand it any longer. I slipped out the door as quietly as possible and walked down the long rear hallway, back and forth. I was not one of the strong. They were the strong. We would be going soon, 'like people leaving a sinking ship'. They would remain. They would always be Finns, and Finns would always be like them, and that is why there will always be a Finland.

That same afternoon I walked down the Esplanade with the Finnish journalist and his young sister. The flags were still at half-mast and the sun was still wonderfully bright, much too bright. Now there were no silhouettes on the top of the big office building on the corner by the harbour. The job of the anti-aircraft gun crews was finished. Suddenly the young Finnish woman burst out passionately: 'If only the air alarm would sound again, how wonderful that would be!' This, as we all knew, was not merely a personal sentiment. It was the feeling of an entire people which had lost a war but could not and would not admit defeat. In reality they had fought alone. Despite all the fine words of English, French, Americans, and Scandinavians, they had fought alone. While Finns were freezing and bleeding and dying to hold the Red army at bay and while Finnish cities and villages were being blasted into ruins, governments in Paris, London, and Washington had discussed and debated what it might be practical to do. While Russian bombers destroyed those very munition supplies without which the Finns could never hold the Mannerheim Line, Americans knitted socks and the Hoover committee gallantly collected food and clothes for a people which was not asking for food, for a people which was asking and praying

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for only one thing—airplanes and weapons with which to fight. While Finnish soldiers on the isthmus fought almost without sleep for twenty days the Swedish and Norwegian governments clung to neutrality and refused to let Allied troops pass through to Finland. Everywhere, in all the democracies, the same reliance on half-way measures and the same shrinking from united action, boldly conceived and boldly executed. Now it was over and the glory belonged only to Finland, but the shame and the failure and the tragedy belonged to every free, democratic nation in the world. Yesterday it had been like that in Spain. To-day it was cruelly, heartbreakingly true of Finland. To-morrow? . . . Ask Stalin, or ask Hitler or Mussolini. After all, they're the only persons who would possibly know.

It was 15 March now, but Irmelin Fagerstrom was still on duty in the emergency dressing station in the Hotel Kamp. She was the Lotta who had served there, cheerfully and uncomplainingly from the beginning to the end of the war. She had cared for two correspondents who had collapsed with serious heart attacks; she had sat up many nights with the little Swiss journalist who had tuberculosis, and had nursed fifteen or twenty newspapermen through the vicious influenza which had laid almost everyone low at one time or another. Lotta Fagerstrom happened to be alone when a Swedish woman journalist, one of the ablest reporters who had come to Finland, came in. She had been in Stockholm and had just returned for the peace. Irmelin Fagerstrom jumped up to greet her.

'Oh, hello, Barbro. I'm so glad to see you—but you have a strange face.'

'Yes, I have a strange face,' said Barbro Alving, speaking with difficulty. 'And you—you can welcome me—and I am a Swede!'

Then they were in each other's arms.

## Chapter 5

### NORWAY AND THE TROJAN HORSE

**I**t was the first week of April 1940 and I had an airplane reservation to fly to Riga on Wednesday. Friends said Riga was wonderful in the spring and after the strain of Finland all I wanted was to go some place where there would be plenty of sunshine and nothing much would be likely to happen. Nevertheless, the Norwegians and the British were still arguing about the naval blockade business. Perhaps it would be wiser to go to Oslo first, just in case something should happen. I sounded out my foreign editor by cable and he was of the same opinion. So I'd have to wait awhile before discovering Riga in the spring, and Edmund Stevens of the *Christian Science Monitor* was in the same boat. We were both tempted to go to Narvik first. That was the key shipping port for Swedish iron ore, and three other correspondents had just set out that way. But how long would it take to get from Narvik down to Oslo? I found it would take three or four days on a coastwise boat as far as Bergen.

'I think we'd better get to Oslo first,' I said to Steve. 'Supposing we're bobbing around off the Norwegian coast when something pops loose in Oslo. Maybe the Norwegians will tell the British to go hang themselves. We won't know anything about it and we won't be able to file a story for days. I'm going straight to Oslo. If things quiet down we can come back by way of Narvik.'

So Steve and I were in Oslo on Thursday night, 4 April, and the only other American correspondent in Norway at that time, Otto Tolischus of the *New York Times*, assured us before leaving for Stockholm that the story was 'all washed up' and we had arrived too late. We weren't so sure about

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that and anyway we wanted to find out about Norway's shipping problems, what the war had done to her cost of living, and lots of things like that. Prices were certainly high in Oslo, much the same as in Stockholm; but the young Norwegians seemed to be having a good time and the beer cellar of the Grand Hotel was crowded with finely built young men and with girls who maintained the Scandinavian standards for schoolgirl complexions and good looks. We noticed plenty of Germans were stopping at the Grand, too; much the same sort of mysterious businessmen and 'tourists' we were accustomed to see in the Stockholm hotels, except that they appeared even more energetic here. One big, smartly dressed and handsomely proportioned fellow we noticed particularly. He was always buzzing in and out with a fat brief-case under his arm, and he had with him a sleek blond Fräulein who looked like a mannequin and acted like the first cousin of the Queen of Sheba. She was a blond eye-ful, in the fullest sense of the term, and whenever her boy friend introduced her to the Norwegians with whom he was constantly conferring she always attracted a proper amount of attention.

We remarked incidentals like these during the cocktail hours, but we kept busy interviewing people until Sunday evening, when we went to dinner at the home of Raymond E. Cox, first secretary of the American legation. There we stumbled on our first bit of real news. The wife of a Norwegian official, unable to restrain her indignation, told me about the most extraordinary diplomatic function that had ever occurred in Oslo. The German legation had held a gala on Friday evening—'uniforms or white ties with decorations'—and had invited every Norwegian minister, all the top-rank Norwegian defence officers, and about two hundred of the most prominent personalities in Oslo society. Then the Germans had shown motion pictures of the Blitzkrieg in Poland and the bombing and burning of Warsaw. The official's wife said the pictures were so terrifying that the Norwegian guests sat in stunned, deathly silence, riveted to their chairs for more than an hour. 'Then, while champagne and sandwiches were being served, the German Minister,



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Dr. Brauer, smilingly asked people how they had enjoyed the film. He even assured us that it wasn't a war film: it was a peace film because it showed what suffering could be avoided by people who chose to remain at peace. Imagine that! Haven't those Nazis got the most colossal nerve! What do you suppose they meant by that performance?"

Riding back to the hotel, I said: 'We've got a swell story, Steve.' But I never got to write it the next day, alas and alack, because the British mined the shore waters between Narvik and Bergen that same night. Lucky we hadn't taken the Narvik route. We were the only foreign correspondents in Oslo at that moment and Oslo was seething with excitement and anxiety.

At the Foreign Office that Monday morning a press spokesman cast official reticence to the winds. 'After this, hell is let loose,' he declared grimly. That evening we went to the Storting (parliament) and heard Dr. Koht, Norway's Foreign Minister, protest against Britain's 'open violation' of Norwegian neutrality. Newspaper extras were hawked on the streets all day and all evening, but at midnight the dance halls were still crowded with students and youngsters improvising swing steps with gleeful abandon and astonishing gusto. Their gaiety, so strangely heedless of the day's news, actually increased our own feeling of uneasiness. 'Maybe there'll be five hundred German bombers over this city before the week is out,' I said. We were scarcely in bed when a terrific honking broke loose over the city and Steve came rushing in shouting: 'You hear that? It's an air-raid alarm.' I wouldn't believe it. 'It's a bunch of cars stuck behind a truck,' I said. 'No air-raid alarm ever sounded like that in Helsinki.' But Steve was right. We knew because we couldn't put on the lights and, sure enough, the streets were plunged in darkness. Not a street car was moving—just a few motor cars screaming through the streets and mystified groups of people huddled at the corner below us. We waited for half an hour or more and nothing happened. Probably it was a test alarm intended to make Osloans more serious-minded. There was nothing we could do at this hour anyway. So we

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went to bed. The crazy honking alarm woke me up several times, but I had had enough sleep ruined by sirens and there would be too much work to do in the morning in any event. On that latter point I was certainly correct. This was the morning of 9 April.

About seven o'clock another alarm destroyed my last effort to doze, but nothing could be seen in the sky from my bedroom window. I started down the corridor to get some papers and stumbled into Orho Toivola, formerly the Finnish press chief in Helsinki. Toivola was very excited.

"Have you heard the news? The Germans presented an ultimatum at five o'clock this morning. They're occupying all Norwegian ports. Parliament has just met."

"What? What in hell——?"

"Yes, yes. The King and the royal family are leaving. The government is evacuating to Hamar. Parliament has voted unanimously to resist. All hell has cut loose. They say they're fighting now down the fjord."

We woke up Steve, and then he and I pumped Toivola, who was leaving at once to follow the government. I ordered my breakfast and started to dress. Then came the familiar roar of big bombers, but louder and nearer than I'd ever heard them in Finland. It was 7.45 a.m. I leaped to the window just as Steve ran in crying: 'Here they are. Here they come. My God, look at them.' They were five huge tri-motored planes with engines wide open, slicing down within five hundred feet of the roof-tops across the park—straight toward our hotel. They roared like hungry lions. We could see the German crosses beneath their wings.

'God help us if they let the bombs go now,' I said. We twisted our necks and looked straight up, helplessly. A split second—no, we were safe. No bombs this time, but of course they'd be back. In a few minutes they were; still swooping low, still roaring, still holding thousands of persons speechless and paralysed on the streets or at their windows. Next time they circled high and machine-guns began to crackle. The Nazi bombers swung steadily and disdainfully over the heart of the city and came in low once more, roaring over the

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Starting building and our hotel. As they circled higher it seemed that an anti-air battery was firing at last. I leaned far out of the window to watch the planes. The spasmodic bursts were hundreds of yards behind them. 'God-awful shooting—almost as bad as if they weren't trying to hit them,' I said. We wondered because the bombers kept circling, calmly and unconcerned, and after a while the firing from below stopped.

Steve said he was going downstairs to find out what was happening. My bacon and eggs were on the table. 'To hell with the planes, I'm going to eat,' I said. 'Probably this'll be our last chance to eat all day. I'll be damned if I'll let the Nazis spoil my breakfast. If they bomb, they'll bomb—but I'll bet they won't.' So I gulped down snatches of food while the planes roared back and forth. A few more 'ak-ak' bursts drew me back to the window, but the anti-aircraft gunners were no nearer their marks than before and they finally gave up entirely. From that time on, the Nazi bombers, sometimes five but sometimes three or only one, roof-hopped over the city every fifteen or twenty minutes for the next three hours. All the while thousands of people stood in knots along the streets and watched curiously. They didn't seem to have any idea what one bomb could do. Something had happened that had never happened to Norwegians for more than a hundred years. War had come to Norway; and war was something utterly incomprehensible to these peace-loving people because they had never believed it could possibly happen to them. We could see this stunned look of incomprehension in their upturned faces. We saw it all that day and for several days to come.

One of the first things I did that morning was to telephone Mrs. Day Adams Morgenstjerne, the young American wife of a Norwegian engineer. On the day before, I had made an arrangement for her to do newspaper translations for me and we had picked a wonderful hour for her to begin—nine o'clock on Tuesday morning, 9 April. Obviously, with Nazi bombers flying over her house, she couldn't leave her two small children at home; but she was one of those women who

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wouldn't be downed even by an invasion—and pretty close to a born reporter as well. She had heard Foreign Minister Koht announce the government's departure by radio at eight-thirty and she also told me the Norwegian Admiralty had an extraordinary communiqué on the air every fifteen minutes. 'The Admiralty says that five large German warships and two small ones have forced their way through the outer fortifications of Oslo fjord,' Mrs. Morgenstjerne said breathlessly.

'But your people must have had mines out,' I protested.

'Of course, you'd think so. But I don't know. Anyhow, the Admiralty says one German warship forced its way past the Oskarsborg fortress and then foundered at Digerud—'

'Foundered where? No, never mind. I'll check on that later. What else?'

'They say the Germans have seized Bergen and Narvik and it's possible they're in Trondheim.'

'My God! How in the devil could they take Narvik and Trondheim? And even if it's true, why is the Norwegian Admiralty telling the whole country things like that?'

'I don't know, but that's what they say—and the radio is warning everybody in Oslo to fill every household receptacle with water, so as to be prepared to fight fires.'

'Well, it's all cock-eyed, but never mind. You're a marvel. Can you stand by and take note of everything? Listen, that's wonderful. That's the biggest thing you can possibly do to help. Yes, I'll call you back in a couple of hours. But take care of your youngsters first. Okay. See you later.'

From that moment we heard nothing except an endless succession of the wildest rumours, but by eleven o'clock the skies were totally empty of planes. What did that mean? No one could figure it out. We kept waiting for squadrons and squadrons of Nazi bombers, but they never came. We had never seen more than five planes, and apparently the same five planes. Where were the Germans? Nobody knew. The Norwegians were already asking: 'Where are the British?' Only fourteen hours before, their government had been berating the British for violating Norway's neutrality by sowing mine-fields to keep German ships from getting through to

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Narvik. Now people were asking: 'Why don't the British come?' And so were Steve and I.

At noon a false peace had settled temporarily over Oslo, leaving everyone still bewildered and questioning and disturbed by the ominous quiet. And at noon who should walk into the Grand Hotel but Warren Irvin, the National Broadcasting Company's Berlin correspondent. Irv had been with us in Finland—and here he was straight from Berlin. He was the only newspaperman of any nationality who had beaten the Germans to their own story and what he had to say opened our eyes pretty wide. 'Of course, I knew it was going to happen. Listen, the Heinies have been planning this thing for at least two weeks. I got the tip-off in Berlin last Thursday night. Some of their camouflaged troop ships sailed that same night. They've got this thing timed to the last second. You can bet on that. I couldn't do anything about it in Berlin. So as soon as I had enough dope to make me sure about the thing, I packed up and started for Oslo. Well, I beat them to it, but they'll be in here soon—unless the British are a lot smarter than they ever have been yet.' We went in to grab a bite of lunch, exulting in the fact that there were only three foreign correspondents in Oslo and we were the three, and all Americans. Actually, at that moment there was a fourth correspondent, the British correspondent of Reuter's, Desmond Tighe. He arrived that morning and slipped out of his hotel from a rear door just as the Germans came in. He caught the last train out of Oslo for Stockholm, a few hops ahead of German guards around the railroad station, that afternoon.

Coming out of the restaurant at half-past two, I walked over to ask the porter about something and he said: 'Aren't you going out to see the Germans come in?'

'What? What did you say? The Germans—'

'Sure. They're going to march up the Karl Johansgade any minute now.'

I yelled to Irv and Steve and we rushed out the door into a mob which completely obstructed the sidewalk. I pushed my way through and landed smack up against a burly fellow in a field-grey uniform. The uniform was German all right

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and so was he. He looked and acted like Victor McLaglen suffering from an acute case of distemper. He was waving his arms and shouting orders at several big Oslo policemen. Well, his uniform was unmistakably German, but he was shouting in excellent Norwegian. Just the same, there was no doubt about what he was saying to the policemen. They started herding people back on the pavements and I noticed that not one of them carried any arms. Later someone explained to me that the Norwegian police never carried revolvers, since they never had any need of them. One of the policemen told me: 'The Germans will be here in a few minutes.' He was very calm and you couldn't tell what he was thinking, or even if he was thinking. Meanwhile the Nazi Victor McLaglen and a dozen of his strong-arm men had gone on up the street, directing traffic and he waving his revolver menacingly. We spotted an empty place on the hotel balcony and from there we could see all the way down the long open boulevard to the foot of the hill, where it leads up to the royal palace. More and more people were lining the boulevard on both sides and most of the windows were crowded now. The boulevard swung around to the left, up the incline and out of sight. It was difficult to estimate, but by three o'clock we thought there must be twenty or thirty thousand people along this route. About ten minutes earlier two open trucks crept slowly up the Karl Johansgade. Each contained two machine-guns and behind each gun a German soldier was stretched out prone. They held the guns ready for action and looked eloquently business-like. The crowd, staring after them, had a full view of those narrow-mouthed little guns, and the murmur of their talk suddenly died away.

At three minutes after three the rumble of the crowd, far down the boulevard, suddenly warned us that the Germans were coming at last. We saw a thin column, marching three abreast, swing into the Karl Johansgade at the foot of the palace hill. Six mounted Norwegian policemen led the way. We could scarcely believe our eyes. They were escorting the Germans in, and here they came. Directly behind the mounted police strode a German general and two other

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officers. We later learned that the commander was General Nikolaus von Falkenhorst. The German regulars marched behind them—three abreast to make the line look longer—granite-faced and loaded with equipment. Some had machine-guns on their shoulders and others carried rifles, also slung on their shoulders. As they came nearer we saw that virtually every man carried an aluminium kit or some kind of briefcase in his left hand, in addition to heavy knapsacks on the backs of all. Not a single soldier held his gun in his hand, ready to use it. 'Sure,' said Irv. 'They know they won't have to use them.' Irv, Steve, and I counted the lines of three as they marched past directly below us. It was important that we should know just how many soldiers there were. By this triple check we found that the total was between fourteen hundred and fifteen hundred men. They were hard-muscled and they had lots of iron in their faces, the coolest cucumbers I have ever seen in uniform anywhere. Some of them could not restrain triumphant smiles. But what we noticed particularly was the fact that the three Nazi officers, out in front, occasionally acknowledged Hitler salutes from persons in the crowd. Evidently the Nazi advance agents were all on hand to welcome them, and there were plenty of upraised palms on our own hotel balcony. 'I wonder where the big fellow and his blond eyeful are?' I said. Then we spied them, just a few feet down our balcony. They were giving the Nazi salute and laughing gaily and the ravishing, streamlined Fräulein was a picture never to be forgotten. I had never seen such triumphant delight on a woman's face in my life. Well, she and her boy friend had fought the real battle for Oslo, no doubt about that.

For a victory parade it was extremely short and over very quickly. Less than fifteen hundred German soldiers had occupied Norway's capital while thousands of dazed, bewildered citizens looked dumbly on. Not a bomb had been dropped inside Oslo. Not a shot was fired. Not a hand or a voice had been lifted—and not a single Nazi soldier had yet reached this captured city by ship. This handful of troops had arrived by air, since daybreak that morning. They had only small weapons

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—but absolutely incredible discipline and nerve. They were an amazingly tiny band of men, but they marched in like conquerors. They were.

That noon, despite terrific obstacles, I had managed to file a cable for the *Chicago Daily News* and Steve had also filed. We had to pay the transatlantic cable tolls in advance and with almost the last cash we had on our persons, for the banks were all closed. Of course, we had slight hope that the dispatches would get through, and no way of knowing. Mine did, but not the next one. About four-thirty that afternoon we heard the radio announce the formation of a 'Quisling national government' and then we heard Major Vidkin Quisling himself—the man who had significantly returned from Berlin on Saturday, when the plot was ready to be sprung; the man who was the foremost traitor of his country, just as Seyss-Inquart had been in Austria. Quisling's language was Norwegian, but his tone was electrifyingly that of Berlin. 'This', he boomed forth, 'is a responsible government which has deposed party politicians. . . . Anyone who does not comply will be considered a criminal.' As these words were spoken we saw Norwegian faces about us become suddenly grave. An hour later I tried to file another story, although I was certain the Germans would already have control of the telegraph office. For the first time the woman at the desk addressed me in German, although she had always spoken in fluent English on my previous visits. '*Sie müssen Fräulein Hauge sehen,*' she stated coldly. 'No, not to-night. To-morrow morning. No. You must see Fräulein Hauge.' That was all there was to that.

As the only radio commentator on the spot, Warren Irvin had a marvellous story—if he could tell it. Which meant, if the German rulers of Oslo would grant him facilities. At the radio station we were referred to 'Premier' Quisling and told we could find him in Room 426 of the Continental Hotel. We went there and were kept waiting for about an hour. Finally we were ushered into a room where three Germans, none of them over forty, awaited us. They had 'Gestapo' written all over their faces. Their leader introduced himself as Reichsamtleiter Schoedt. He was frigidly polite and examined Irv's



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Berlin broadcasting credentials very carefully. Then he said we could see Quisling, but he wouldn't be able to do anything about this matter, the man we would have to see was Herr Doktor So-and-So in the German legation. We happened to buttonhole Quisling in the corridor and he looked and acted as if he had as much authority as a woodchuck in a lion's den. He merely agreed that Reichsamtleiter Schoedt was handling all such matters. The only ministerial post that Quisling had ever held had been as Minister of War in 1932-3. We had already heard reports that he had profited by the opportunity to recommend promotions and appointments for pro-German or pro-Nazi officers in the Norwegian army. Certainly he was not impressive to look at—but he was here as a tool for the conquerors of Oslo. There could be no doubt about that.

When we dined that night we were very much alone and extremely conspicuous, speaking English in the Grand Hotel restaurant. The place was already filled with German officers and with many more plain-clothes Germans. They were all drinking champagne and the blond eyeful was having a wonderful time. Among the new arrivals that afternoon we had noticed a tall, keen-eyed German with a peculiarly sardonic smile. One of the first things he had done was to confer with the clerk at the desk and get the names of all foreigners living at the hotel. He and half a dozen young men with him were not too busy celebrating to keep their eyes on us in a fleeting but efficient sort of way.

The next day, Wednesday, a lot of things happened with whirlwind rapidity. Our hotel doorman was already giving the Nazi salute, right and left, to everyone who went in or out, including ourselves. A little later, as I entered, I noticed a heavy-set man who was smoking a cigar and lounging in the corner behind the revolving doors. I walked a dozen paces and turned quickly around, just in time to catch him staring at me and questioning the doorman. He was as obvious as a mole on a bathing beauty's thigh—just an interesting sign of Gestapo speed and thoroughness. But I was feeling in a tantalizing mood, so I walked back out the door whistling

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*Yankee Doodle.* I had made an early trip that morning to the telegraph office and made several discoveries on the way. As I walked toward the parliament building I was surprised to hear men's voices singing lustily. A large upper window of the Storting was thrown wide open. It was crowded with thirty or forty German soldiers and one of them had an accordion. They were singing German folk-songs with as much verve and joviality as a group of students in a college dormitory; and they had collected about three hundred Osloans on the pavements below them. The whole thing was staged like a good-humoured, boisterous serenade—from the very windows of Norway's parliament from which Norwegian democracy had just been driven, fleeing for its life. I looked at the faces of the people around me. Most of them registered mild amusement, but I saw one woman turn swiftly around and hurry away with her face crimson and her hands to her eyes. Hers happened to be the only expression of indignation and shame that I saw in Oslo those first three days. With most people the terrible truth seemed to sink in with an extraordinary Nordic tardiness. It seemed that most Norwegians could believe neither their eyes nor their ears.

Unfortunately, however, the people of Oslo did believe what the radio told them. That morning we saw five German planes flying south and then a group of fifteen more as we hiked the two and a half miles out to the American legation. Cars and taxis had been requisitioned by the government at daybreak on Tuesday, and many of those that remained had by now been seized by the Nazis. Before eleven o'clock an air-raid alarm sounded, and by the time we started back toward the centre of the city Oslo's streets were an amazing sight. Thousands and thousands of men, women, and children jammed the pavements and streets. They were hurrying as fast as they could walk, propelled by fear. 'The British are going to bomb Oslo at twelve o'clock,' they said. 'It was announced on the radio. Don't go into the city. You'll be killed.' Others said the police had gone into the air shelters and told them to leave the city immediately. They were carrying suitcases, or winter coats, dresses, and sweaters over their arms—all kinds of

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crude bundles. Every street was filled with scurrying, breathless people and occasionally an automobile, crammed with humanity and luggage of all kinds, roared past me. This continued for several hours and most of this multitude spent the night on the cold, snow-covered hills outside Oslo. The next day the Oslo newspapers called this exodus a panic. In any case, it had been cleverly prepared and probably no more than half a dozen Nazi agents had been required to put the thing in motion. Psychologically it was a master stroke. It spread fear throughout the population and it focused the attention of all Osloans upon the British as the 'real' enemy.

The Nazis had been in Oslo less than fifteen hours when a proclamation by General von Falkenhorst, printed in perfect Norwegian, appeared in thousands of copies on shop windows and walls everywhere. I saw them before nine o'clock that Wednesday morning. Among other things the German commander's proclamation declared that 'the German government cannot tolerate that new fields of battle be made according to the wishes of the English and French warmongers.' It concluded by warning that 'there must be no active or passive resistance. It would be useless and be crushed by all power forces.' After that brotherly remark came the neat phrase: 'The safety of the country against English attack is now being taken care of by the German army and fleet.' The air alarm and the false panic had served to clinch that unpleasant harrowing thought about an 'English attack'. Most Osloans had read the proclamation, soberly and fearfully, just before the alarming reports of an impending British air raid had been spread like wildfire through the city. When you reviewed when and how things had happened it was difficult to dismiss such matters as accidental.

In fact, nothing was accidental about this military occupation as we saw it unfold before our eyes. The fifteen hundred Germans marched in at 3 p.m. on Tuesday. Within three hours they had guards posted around the Storting, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the royal palace, the radio and telegraph centres, the railroad station, and every important public building. They had their thousands of copies of von

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Falkenhorst's proclamation posted before daybreak. (Quite possibly it had been printed, either in Berlin or in Oslo, days before that.) The Oslo newspapers of the next morning had all been taken over by Nazi supervisors and censored. Within another twenty-four hours Quisling's pro-Nazi weekly, *Fritt Folk* (*Free People*), appeared as a daily. It had never had a circulation in excess of 3,000 in all Norway (that was how infinitesimal a proportion of even partial converts the Nazis needed for their purposes, provided they could count on a few key men near the top and on the inside). The *Aftenposten* was compelled to run off 200,000 copies of *Fritt Folk*—on the second day of the Nazi occupation. But now it was only Wednesday and the Nazi technique of conquest was already functioning like a brand-new turbine. Norwegian banks, hotels, and shopkeepers were informed they must honour the currency which the German army had brought with it. This hundred-per-cent *paper* currency bore the jaw-breaking name of *Reichskreditkassenscheine* and 100 of these *Kassenscheine* were declared to be worth 166.6 Norwegian kroner. With the kroner approximately five to the dollar, a Nazi trooper could buy over seven pounds' worth of fine Norwegian goods for a hundred absolutely phony *Kassenscheine*. Of course, this Nazi paper money had also been prepared and printed long in advance. To-day there must be tens of thousands of once well-to-do Norwegians who have had almost every honest kroner they ever possessed replaced by *Kassenscheine*. Conquerors do not call this robbery. It simply works out that way when all the stocks in stores or business enterprises have been carried away by greedy Nazi hands.

Walking around Oslo on Wednesday we saw many strange sights. An open truck stood beside the telegraph office. It had a machine-gun mounted on it and a crowd of young Norwegians crowded around the Nazi gun crew. Several of them talked eagerly with the German soldiers and the girls gazed at them admiringly. We saw this scene repeated in many parts of the city. There still did not seem to be any resentment toward the new kings of Oslo. Most of the Nazi soldiers acted as if they enjoyed being stared at. But the non-com

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standing on the truck near the telegraph building looked down at his young admirers with an unforgettable expression of disdain on his hard face. As for Irv, Steve, and myself, we were still utterly baffled by the reactions of Oslo's population, and the more we observed, the hotter we became under the collar.

Inside the telegraph office a woman came up to us and asked: 'What are you Americans going to do about this?'

'Madame, what are you Norwegians going to do about it?' demanded Irv. 'This is your country, isn't it?'

The woman seemed startled by this idea. Then, in confusion, she said: 'I'm sorry. I hadn't thought of it that way. But what can we do now? What can we do?'

A young student from Oslo University, sitting with us in the Grand's café that evening, also wanted to know what America was going to do.

'But what about you Norwegians? After all, your army is fighting only sixty miles north of here.'

'But I've never had any military training. I don't know anything about being a soldier,' the student replied.

This was not all of Norway and certainly not the true face of Norway, yet Oslo's cafés were still filled with people and about half of the customers were men, a great many of them young men. They sat and talked that Wednesday afternoon and evening, and most of them were still sitting talking on Thursday. The first blow had been too much for them. Quite often people said to us despairingly: 'We can't do anything. We are too little.' But the main Norwegian army was fighting, and fighting gallantly, just to the north. The only defeatism was where people had not fought and had never been trained to fight; yet that was sufficient to load the scales seriously against Norway's resistance, unless an awakening came very soon. What seemed most incongruous of all was to see groups of Norwegian volunteers to Finland, still in uniform, sauntering on the Karl Johansgade, apparently without thought of going now to join their own army. One of these volunteers began to chat with me and he, too, asked: 'Why doesn't America do something?'

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My response had become automatic by this time. 'Why don't you help yourselves?'

'Well, we did a lot more for the Finns than you did,' he answered. As an American he had me there. By Friday afternoon, when I left Oslo, there were not so many young men in the capital. They had begun to hike northward, and more and more must have followed. Slowly, very slowly, the Osloans were beginning to wake up to a reality which had been smiting their faces for four days. By Wednesday night, however, not a German ship had yet entered Oslo harbour. The Nazi forces of occupation had merely been doubled by air and now totalled not more than three thousand. They were still spread very thinly, but it didn't matter, especially since the British air force had not been heard from.

General von Falkenhorst and some of his shrewd Gestapo assistants made Thursday, 11 April, a song-fest day in Oslo. Even on Wednesday morning, well before eight o'clock, a single company of German soldiers had marched smartly and cockily up the Karl Johansgade, singing to the harsh accompaniment of Prussian boots. Probably that little group of 140 men represented the only members who could be spared from guard duty, the remainder of the small Nazi garrison all being required to hold the strategic government buildings. But this one company did a great deal of vocal parading through the city's streets. By Thursday the technique of musical conquest had proved itself very effective at creating a false impression of friendliness and peaceful intentions. About ten o'clock that morning the Nazis' serenading of Oslo began in earnest. A twelve- or fifteen-piece military band took position in the park across from our hotel and directly below the front façade of the Storting. The German musicians opened up gaily with the catchy measures of *Roll Out the Barrel* and they followed it with dozens of popular dance tunes until lunch time, then continued all afternoon until sunset. The band played well and its members joked and laughed between numbers, as pleasantly at ease as if they were playing at a carnival in Old Heidelberg. They piped so zestfully that they were always surrounded by at least two or three hundred Os-

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loans, most of whom could scarcely resist the music's appeal and many of whom showed signs of perplexity over the extraordinary *Gemütlichkeit* of these German forces of occupation.

That afternoon, returning from another hike to the American legation, Irv, Steve, and I at last spied what we had long expected to see in Oslo harbour. Seven German transport ships, several of them bulking 8,000 tons or more, were poking their way across the capital's inner harbour. By the time we reached the quays two of the largest were already tied up and disembarking troops. As we approached, a great wave of masculine voices rolled across the water from the other ships, waiting at anchor half a mile out. Each vessel was crammed with thousands of men in field-grey uniforms and they, too, were singing as if they had come on a pleasure jaunt to inspect the famed beauties of the Norwegian landscape. German men have excellent voices and sing wonderfully well in chorus. The rollicking harmony of these Nazi soldiers created the illusion of jovial light-heartedness as they strode down the gangplanks, loaded down with rifles, machine-guns, and equipment. Already their songs had attracted thousands of Norwegians to the streets which lined the harbour. But Oslo's citizens were now seeing military power on a forbidding scale and they watched the disembarkation silently with faces much more serious than they had been until now. The Nazi troops fell into line on the near-by pavements in most business-like fashion. They marched far enough along to leave ample room for their successors; then they laid down their guns and knapsacks in neat piles and resumed their assigned task of 'musical attack'. Already two of the first companies had dispersed on a grassy embankment and there they lounged, forming long rows with their arms thrown across one another's shoulders. Their leader carried a deadly weapon, a splendid accordion, and he pumped from it a series of rollicking German folk-songs. As he played, the soldiers swayed back and forth like American college boys giving a campus serenade during junior-prom week. This went on uninterruptedly for hours and long after dark.

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Meanwhile we saw army kitchens and small field guns and many horses being swung ashore by cranes. We chatted with soldiers at various points along the quays. All were polite and anxious to know about Oslo. A few smilingly inquired whether Norwegian Fräuleins were as pretty as they were generally reported to be. Some asked if it would be difficult to buy film for their cameras. All, however, were quiet and efficient—extremely efficient to look at—and all scrupulously avoided giving any information about their ports of departure from Germany and how long they had been en route. Meanwhile one group or another was always singing and the faces of the constantly increasing throng of Norwegian spectators proved most interesting to watch. But this was the first arrival of German troops by ship and it was big news—if you could get it out. Neither Irv nor Steve thought there was a chance of doing that and I felt just as hopeless about it, remembering Fräulein Hauge somewhere behind the scenes in the Oslo telegraph office. Nevertheless, I felt you must always take a chance—even the slimmest kind of chance. So, within an hour, I hurried up to the telegraph building. I scratched off a brief twenty-five-word message and sent it to Carroll Binder, our foreign editor in Chicago. I paid for the message, quite confident it was money thrown away—but you never could tell. Oddly enough, the Nazi censorship allowed this message to be sent, though I never knew this until after my return to Stockholm. Much later I learned that our editors could scarcely believe the message when they received it, and they published it, quite wisely, with a warning that the Nazis might possibly have altered its contents before sending it on to America.

When I got back to the quays we watched the Germans disembark for several hours more. As nearly as we could estimate, at least twenty thousand troops were landing in Oslo that evening. The British had lost their great opportunity to keep troop ships out of Oslo harbour and so kill all possibility of a German land offensive in southern Norway.

Three days had now passed since the flight of the Nor-



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wegian government and the arrival of the first Nazi soldiers by air in Oslo. During all this time the residents of Norway's capital knew no more about what had happened down at the narrows of Oslo fjord on Tuesday morning than the outside world knew at that time. Inevitably the Norwegian government leaders, who had been honour-bound to withdraw northward, were equally mystified and uninformed. To us as the only foreign newspapermen in Oslo the mystery surrounding the Nazis' forcing of Oslo fjord had been our greatest preoccupation. That was the big story. Why and how had the fjord, with its formidable natural defences and its important fortifications, fallen so easily? What had happened between Monday midnight and daybreak Tuesday morning? Was it true there had been fighting down the fjord? Was it true that the guns of Oskarsborg fortress, in the narrows, had fired and then had ceased firing? Had German cruisers actually been sunk? In regard to all these questions the wildest rumours had been circulating and for three days we three Americans had bent every effort to obtain some evidence which would dissipate the fog of confusion, rumour, and uncertainty in which all Oslo was living. Despite all our efforts as experienced reporters it was not until Thursday that we began to get at the facts behind the amazing events of that historical Tuesday morning.

After all, Oskarsborg and the Norwegian naval base at Horten were not many miles down the fjord, but lack of motor transportation of any kind made it impossible for us to get there. On Thursday morning the American naval attaché enlisted the services of the indomitable Mrs. Day Morgenstierne as chauffeur and interpreter, but quite providentially I had previously engaged her services; so she had promised to bring us back a report on whatever she learned and observed. The American diplomatic service enjoyed a natural priority on transportation facilities, but we had a most intelligent and attractive ace upon whom we could rely as an authority on things Norwegian. Meanwhile, that Thursday, fortune smiled on me from all directions. While crossing the park in the morning I noticed a young and handsome Nor-

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wegian youth who was waiting for a street car. But what attracted my attention were his skiing clothes and the large knapsack he was carrying. Aha! What would a young Norwegian be doing with that out-of-doors get-up unless he was slipping out of Oslo to join his country's army in the north? So I walked up to him and took a chance—in either German or English, I've forgotten which. In any case, he understood perfectly and was very friendly as soon as I had established my identity as an American correspondent.

By incredible good luck my intuition had been more than right. This young Norwegian was not only on his way to join Norway's gallant main army; he was also a member of the naval base at Horten and had just come from there with several others who had escaped capture by the Germans. He gave me the first factual details of what had happened down the fjord that fateful Tuesday morning before daybreak. The gist of it was that two German cruisers had been sunk, but that the crews of three Norwegian war vessels off Horten had been sent ashore without arms about two in the morning, before the Nazis came. Everyone but the stokers and messmen had been put ashore, except for the crew of the little mine-layer, the *Olaf Trygvason*. For some inexplicable reason the *Olaf Trygvason* didn't receive the orders and so it had resisted when the Germans came. But the Germans had got about a hundred men ashore at Horten and those few Norse sailors who had guns had fought. Four of them had been killed and two Germans. 'But the officers on our ships ran up white flags. I don't understand it. We never knew why they did it. We thought they must have got orders from our government.'

The young Norwegian seaman gave me more and exciting details about what had happened at Horten, and many of these were later confirmed by an Oslo journalist and others. Then Mrs. Morgenstjerne returned that night with authoritative information which completely corroborated and rounded out the picture. In totality this evidence, from several different quarters, revealed an unbelievable Nazi plot which had been perpetrated almost without a hitch and with amaz-

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ing boldness and efficiency. Thanks to this plot Norway's capital and every one of her great seaports had been seized by the Nazis within the incredible space of twelve staggering, fantastic hours—between three o'clock in the morning on 9 April and three that same afternoon. The first steps toward the invasion of Norway had been taken in Germany on 24 March, a full fifteen days before the blow of armed occupation was struck with lightning-like speed and paralysing cunning. That was when German merchant ships, secretly loaded with soldiers and arms, began creeping up the Norwegian coast and anchoring in key ports like Bergen, Trondheim, and Narvik under various pretexts. All were instructed to strike in the darkness of the early morning hours of 9 April. All were counting upon the false sense of security and easy-going habits of the trusting Norwegians. All were assured that the way had been paved inside Norway by Hitler's secret agents and here and there by innocent or active Norwegian accomplices.

With this brief background it is now possible to give the composite story of what happened in Oslo fjord, as it was assembled from various sources and witnesses who were on the spot at that time. What makes this story all the more interesting is the fact that Germany's high army officers, according to very reliable sources in Berlin, had strongly opposed the wild gamble of invading Norway and were convinced that this fabulous Nazi plot was courting almost certain disaster. Many German naval officers were reported to have been equally sceptical and reluctant to expose their ships to destruction. But Hitler and his expert plotters overrode the opposition of all orthodox military minds, thereby proving to the world that the Nazis alone are experts in the use of conspiracy and treachery as a deadly weapon.

Now the clock rolls back to shortly after one-thirty on the morning of 9 April. Three Norwegian naval ships lie off Horten's base in Oslo fjord. Their commander suddenly receives an urgent order, supposedly direct from the Norwegian government or from Foreign Minister Koht. (Just how this order was transmitted and by whose authority has never been

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definitely established, but its transmission cannot be doubted.) The commander is told that German warships are coming up the fjord very soon. He is ordered not to resist, but to put all his men ashore at once—without arms of any kind. Apparently the commander does not question the authenticity of this order. At any rate, he carries it out. But the order is for the three war vessels which persons in Oslo knew were lying off Horten. It does not include the mine-layer, *Olaf Trygvason*, because she had unexpectedly come in for repairs after nightfall on Monday night. Simultaneously, according to later testimony of Norwegian naval men, somebody in the naval control base at Oskarsborg disconnected the electric mines which were strewn in front of the narrows.<sup>1</sup> Aside from the presence of the *Olaf Trygvason*, the first stage in the plot is functioning perfectly down Oslo fjord.

At half-past three that morning a group of men assembles on the quay of Oslo's inner harbour, apparently without attracting the slightest attention from the capital's police. The group is headed by Dr. Brauer, Germany's Minister to Norway. Most of the German legation staff are with him, as well as expectant Nazi newspapermen who are eagerly waiting to obtain exclusive eyewitness accounts of a story that will astonish the world. They have been told that Germany's powerful cruiser the *Blücher* will dock in Oslo harbour at four-fifteen sharp; that she will bring a major-general and the general staff of Germany's expeditionary force to Norway, together with fifteen hundred troops. According to Berlin's audacious plan, the Norwegian government will not receive the slightest warning about what has happened until after all troops have disembarked from the *Blücher*. Then King Haakon and the members of the government will be captured as they leap,

<sup>1</sup> This development has since been disputed by Norwegian government spokesmen who had to leave Oslo that same morning. Some have denied that there were any mines placed in Oslo fjord. If this were true, however, no explanation has been offered of what would constitute almost criminal negligence on the part of Norway's Ministry of the Navy after a full day of crisis over Britain's action in placing minefields off the central Norwegian coast and the immediate threat of German intervention.

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startled and bewildered, from their beds.<sup>1</sup> But four-fifteen comes and the impatient German reception committee on the quay begins to have fearful doubts. By five o'clock it is clear that something has gone wrong. At last Dr. Brauer, boldly deciding to rely upon bluff as a last and only resort, calls upon Norway's Foreign Minister and delivers Berlin's ultimatum—just as if the *Blücher* and German troops were already in the city. Whatever may have gone strangely and inexplicably amiss down Oslofjord, Dr. Brauer is certain that the plot must succeed in other Norwegian ports. In any case, the essence of a gigantic gamble is to gamble through to the very end.

But it is now 4.30 a.m. down at Horten. The cruiser *Emden* and two German submarines steam confidently up toward the naval base. The three Norwegian war vessels give no sign of life. It looks as if the incredible plot would work to perfection. But over to one side, almost too small to notice, lies the little mine-layer—obviously of no consequence. So the *Emden* glides forward, sensing her overwhelming strength; glides forward until she is almost abreast of the *Olaf Trygvason*. Then the tiny *Olaf* lets go with her Bofors guns, a terrific point-blank blast of explosives. The *Emden* keels over and has almost disappeared when another round from the *Olaf* dooms one of the submarines. Then the astonished Norwegian commander orders the mine-layer to run up a white flag. Another warship, presumably the *Blücher*, comes up. About a hundred marines are landed; a brief one-sided exchange of shots, and Horten is captured. The Norwegian sailors, most of them unarmed, stand dumbfounded and helpless, asking one another: 'Why did they tell us not to fight?'

Shortly afterward the *Blücher*, with its invaluable cargo of expeditionary corps commanders and approximately fifteen hundred men, proceeds into the narrows. Of course, that insignificant little mine-layer has caused a nasty hitch. Perhaps the German admiral on the *Blücher's* bridge is somewhat anxious now, but the mighty cruiser slips serenely into the narrows and all aboard are counting upon Oskarsborg's big

<sup>1</sup> This part of the plot was admitted by Nazi leaders in Oslo later on.

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guns having been spiked by treachery. Now the dark hulk of the *Blücher* looms straight in front of Oskarsborg, much closer than eight hundred yards. Inside the old but granite-padded fortress an unknown Norwegian artillery officer gives a sharp command. The guns belch deafeningly. Their shells strike just above the cruiser's waterline. In less than five minutes the *Blücher* plunges to the bottom, carrying with her all but fifty or sixty of the hundreds of Germans on board. The original commander-in-chief of the Nazi army of occupation is gone. So is his general staff. So is the admiral. So are the troops which should have captured Norway's King and Norway's capital. All because of a Norwegian officer, inside Oskarsborg, who remained faithful to his duty and could not be bought. The *Emden* and a German submarine are also gone, because the officers and crew of the *Olaf Trygvason* were too alert and courageous to be betrayed as other brave men had been betrayed. These two hitches in an otherwise perfect conspiracy have placed the Nazi invaders in a most dangerously tight place, but unfortunately for Norway, only the Germans know that this is true—and the Nazis long ago became experts in the game of bluff. Having failed to seize Oslo by sea, they do not need more than a few bombs and planes to seize Fornebu airport from the air. Then fifteen hundred men are landed from air transports in the course of a single morning and Oslo is occupied, through sheer nerve coupled with clocklike efficiency. So, for the first time, a nation's capital is taken by air-borne troops.

By Friday morning, 12 April, we knew this amazing series of events in full detail at last. But we had only been able to learn this story of conspiracy and treachery by remaining in Oslo, something which Norwegian government officials were unable to do. We had also learned that Kjeller, Oslo's military air port, had been bombed on Tuesday morning, but only one hit of a serious nature was registered. Nevertheless, we were told that the officer in command at Kjeller ordered his men to surrender because the German forces were 'overwhelming'. Actually, Edmund Stevens was later informed, the Nazis were about one third as numerous as the defending

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Norwegians at that time. I mention this merely because surrender occurred in several other quarters under similar circumstances, and in each case Norwegian soldiers complained that their commanding officer had made it impossible for them to fight, as they desired to do. But by Friday noon it was no longer necessary for us to linger in Oslo. Already train communications with Sweden had been severed. Already the Nazi Gestapo had issued orders compelling all foreigners to register with the police, and the turn for Americans would come on Sunday or Monday. Already, too, it was reported that no foreigners could leave Oslo by car or in any other manner. Since we now had the big and all-important story, Irv and I decided to gamble everything on getting to Sweden, and Mrs. Day Morgenstierne, having been born with an adventurous spirit and a gallant heart, was ready to chauffeur us through anybody's army, including Adolf Hitler's.

That afternoon we checked out of the Grand Hotel as inconspicuously as possible. As I walked out the door the tall, sardonic Gestapo official, with whom I had had several bantering conversations, was standing near by. But I took pains to walk out empty-handed and to saunter up the street half a block. Soon Day Morgenstierne's car stopped at the curb. We had the letters which an American legation officer had kindly given us, and an American flag to put on the car. All night long, German troops had debarked from the ships in the inner harbour, but they had not wasted any time in Oslo. They were veteran troops from the invasion of Poland. Their advance guards were already many hours out of Oslo, striking northward and eastward in long columns. We passed other columns as we drove toward the city limits and we didn't begin to breathe easily until we were well outside Oslo. Then the lady who was driving us began to have a really good time. We took the road toward Mysen on the advice of a map expert who was travelling in the front seat with our charming chauffeur. We passed a long line of rumbling German army kitchens, all drawn by horses which had been brought with the troops from Germany. Then we came up with fifteen Norwegian buses filled with German soldiers. They laughed

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and waved at us while we waited to get by. As yet we hadn't been stopped or questioned once. But we overtook a second column. The German army colonel was very polite and he fully appreciated both the smile and the flashing dark eyes of our chauffeur. Regretfully he stated that there was reported to be fighting on the Mysen road ahead. We would have to turn back; a question of safety. In perfect German the lady with the smile expressed our appreciation of the situation, so we turned back to consult the road maps once more, and then gambled on the chance that the Germans had not yet occupied Fredrikstad at the mouth of Oslo fjord to the south.

Another thirty miles and we caught up with a third German column near Moss. Here were hundreds more Nazi troops in requisitioned Oslo buses. A lusty youth took one look at our driver and yelled: 'Hey, lady!' We laughed and waved back. Then our pilot turned her devastating orbs on the commander at the head of the column and chattered her little piece about Americans trying to get to Sweden and escape the terrors of war. Papers? Oh yes, here they are. The German officer examined the papers from the occupants of the front seat—and most agreeably neglected to look at the newspaper credentials of Irv and myself.

'Have your troops yet occupied Fredrikstad?' asked our chauffeur.

'Not yet.'

'Is the way open to the Swedish frontier?'

'Oh yes. I don't think you will have a bit of trouble,' replied the officer with a bow.

'*Danke vielmals*,' chirped the lady in her most ingratiating voice.

The German officer clicked his heels handsomely and on we rode. But it was a race all the way against the sun, for when night came it would be impossible to drive with headlights on. We had only a little more than an hour of daylight and several bridges before us, any of which might be blown up. Two of them were, and one of these meant a fifteen-mile detour to Sarpsborg, toward which the last, and fourth, German column had been heading. The Sarpsborg bridge was



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barricaded. That meant we would have to try to get across the ferry at Fredrikstad, provided it was still operating or had not already departed on its last trip of the day. If we got stuck there, we should probably be caught and delayed for days or maybe for weeks—merely the routine of armies in the process of occupying a country. Day Morgenstjerne drove like mad for the ferry. It was just on the verge of pulling out as our car slid down the runway. Now we were only about one mile from the Swedish frontier and our car was speeding serenely through the rapidly gathering dusk. Our chauffeur laughed gaily as she guided the car over the twisting road between pine-clad hills. 'What a lot of fun!' she said.

Soon we passed two lonely Norwegian sentries, who knew nothing at all about what was happening even twenty miles away and who listened to our news with serious faces. Then we slipped down a long hill to a little house which had a sign, lettered in Swedish, above the door. It was almost dark now, but this was the Swedish passport office. Soon Irv and I were standing on a boat-landing and trying to express our thanks to the two friends who had rendered us such an immense service. 'Don't worry about us,' said Day Morgenstjerne. 'We've had a wonderful time.' Another ten minutes and we were in Sweden. If we hired a car and drove all night we could get to Göteborg in the morning. And that is what we did.

It was a mean trick of fate that Warren Irvin could not broadcast to America all the details of what we had learned about the Trojan horse in Norway, but there were important reasons which prevented him from doing so at that time. That was how I found myself with the greatest newsbeat a newspaperman could imagine, safely in my notebook. But the *Chicago Daily News* foreign syndicate supplies afternoon newspapers. I had to hold this scoop from Saturday afternoon until six o'clock Monday evening, Swedish time, and pray that the inside story of the capture of Oslo fjord would still be exclusive news forty-eight hours later. By almost inconceivable good fortune, it was. Similar and confirming details from other news agencies and correspondents only began to

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appear in the days following publication of my own lengthy dispatches. Long after the event, it is a source of great satisfaction to me that my Trojan-horse news articles have never been contradicted in any of their main essentials and least of all by the Nazi authors of the Norwegian plot.

When I returned to America ten months later, I learned with deep regret that certain Norwegian officials, including the Norwegian Minister to the United States and Dr. Carl J. Hambro, president of the Storting, had severely attacked the accuracy of my dispatches about Oslo. In a pamphlet reproduced from the *American-Scandinavian Review* Edvard Hambro denounced 'irresponsible and sensational reporting by journalists who did not understand Norwegian, who had no knowledge of our country and who substituted gossip and rumours for the information they could not obtain'. I was cited as 'most prominent of these writers'. I also learned that the Honourable W. Morgenstierne, Norwegian Minister in Washington, had repeatedly declared that there had been only one traitor in Norway, Quisling by name. This statement seemed to me most surprising, but no more so than various challenges to my journalistic integrity which were uttered by Dr. Carl J. Hambro in the course of lectures from coast to coast in the United States. It is painful to have to mention these incidents, yet they are of such a nature as to compel my attention, however briefly and reluctantly. First of all, however, I would express my deep appreciation to a number of prominent Norwegian-Americans who have informed me that they had personal knowledge about Trojan-horse activities in Norway and that they regretted greatly efforts which had tended to discredit my reliability among Norwegian-Americans.

I believe that most of the controversy in Norwegian circles about my Oslo dispatches developed from two understandable causes: first, a naturally wounded pride over the initial bewilderment of the people in Oslo during the first days of the German occupation; secondly, from an entirely misplaced assumption that my reports of what I saw happen and heard said in Oslo, during those first days, constituted a

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general indictment of Norwegians for lack of courage. In regard to the first item, the Osloans certainly reacted very slowly to the harsh realities of the Nazi invasion and what it must inevitably mean. They were dumbfounded and caught in a terrible nightmare. If this nightmare paralysed them for a few days, it was certainly not a national disgrace. Nevertheless, Stevens, Irvin, and I could not honourably report any other reactions than those which we saw, and these reactions could not conceivably be denied—nor have they ever been to date—by the residents of Oslo themselves. In regard to the assumption of a sweeping indictment of all Norwegians, I am certain that this has been based upon a most erroneous supposition: namely, that my report of what happened in Oslo during the first four days represented my final word about Norwegian patriotism and courage. Journalistically, this report of mine could not pretend to be any such thing, nor did that fall within the province of a reporter reporting what had happened in only one section of the country. Why did I not write an impressive dispatch about the heroism of Norwegian troops fighting in other parts of Norway? Because, at that moment, other correspondents were with those troops and that was their story, on the spot, where the Norwegians were resisting so magnificently. Why did I not write about this later? Because the tides of war took me into the Anglo-French sector below Namsos, where I saw only a few Norse troops and none of these in action. Instead I encountered a catastrophic British defeat, and that was news which had to be filtered to the outside world immediately. I had scarcely finished this when Germany invaded Holland and Belgium and I was ordered to hurry to Moscow and the Balkans. Thus I lost any opportunity to follow the last phase of the Norwegian campaign in the far north or to pay a much deserved tribute to that little Norwegian army which resisted the Nazis' war machine for two whole months with inspiring gallantry.

It has surprised me that well-intentioned Norwegian spokesmen should have disregarded completely the extreme care with which I prefaced my dispatch on the betrayal of

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Norway. One of its opening paragraphs reads: 'By bribery and extraordinary infiltration on the part of Nazi agents and by treason *on the part of a few* [italics mine] highly-placed Norwegian civilian and defence officials, the German dictatorship built a Trojan horse inside of Norway.' Perhaps I should also have added: 'and by criminal negligence', although the margin between betrayal and criminal negligence is exceedingly thin when a nation is attacked. In any case, no apologist has yet succeeded in denying the delivery of a message to the Norwegian naval commander at Horten ordering him to let the Nazi warships pass through the fjord. It has not been explained how such an order could be accepted unless it came from inside a high governmental ministry in Oslo, or how a Nazi agent (if one sent the message) could have penetrated the Ministry of Marine or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at that hour of the night. Nor has any explanation been offered as to how Nazi agents managed to know exactly where to telephone and whom to address. Furthermore, I have not yet been able to obtain any explanation as to why responsible naval officers would credit anything but oral orders received directly from their own highest commanding officer or minister when the order contained astonishing instructions to open up the sea channel of their country's capital to German forces. It must appear irrefutable that nothing less than a combination of betrayal and grossest negligence would ever have made possible the forcing of Oslo fjord's virtually impregnable passage, as happened during those few hours before daybreak on 9 April. Moreover, why were the German Minister and his staff waiting with such confidence on Oslo's quay at half-past three that morning? Obviously, they knew the fjord could not be forced by frontal attack without many days of fierce engagements, if ever by forceful means. Quite obviously, they also knew that everything had been taken care of, including a few 'someones' whose co-operation had been assured. If the Nazis had been counting upon a single telephone call getting through and being believed, they would never have felt certain (as they themselves later admitted in Oslo) that the *Blücher* and *Emden* would get through

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without the slightest hitch. The Germans were not at Horten on 11 April, when it was visited by the American naval attaché and Mrs. Morgenstierne. At that time Norwegian naval men declared flatly that the only way the Nazis had forced their passage through the fjord was by treason. There was no doubt in their minds about this.

Edmund Stevens, who remained in Oslo and southern Norway for another week after my departure, found further evidence which pointed to collusion or to inexplicable lack of courage among a few Norwegian army officers. At Kongsberg he was informed that officers had commanded 1,300 Norwegian soldiers to surrender to 500 Germans. At Sarpsborg it was stated, by Norwegians, that nearly 3,000 of their troops were assembled in the city square and ordered to lay down their arms, after which some 300 Germans took possession. If these are round figures, the events themselves cannot be doubted. Later Steve wrote: 'I checked these and similar instances on the spot a few hours afterwards, both from German and Norwegian sources. The net result of my own observations and those of other neutrals is that in the Oslo region, where half of the total population lives, the only "iron resistance" is in the British news broadcasts.'

Two weeks later, while near Storlien to the north, I met a Swedish journalist who had been in Trondheim. He gave a factual, detailed account according to which the commander of the Hasselvik fortress on Trondheim fjord had ordered his men, inside the fortifications, to surrender to a small landing force of about 300 Germans. We heard of a number of reported cases of this kind, but those at Kongsberg and Sarpsborg in southern Norway were verified. What prompted these two army officers to order their men to surrender without a fight, I do not know. It may have been that they were stampeded by fear. It may be they were secretly pro-Nazi, or it may have been something worse than that. In any case, what happened could scarcely be described as anything less than betrayal of their trust as Norwegian officers. These incidents may not have been numerous, yet their effect was disastrous. They constituted a serious blow to the main body of Norwe-

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gian troops who were fighting with splendid courage against terrific odds in central Norway and to the north. Viewing the conquest of Norway objectively and with the greatest goodwill, it must be admitted on the basis of all available facts that a Trojan horse had been set up in Norway by the Nazis and that a certain amount of treason assisted the execution of an otherwise almost hopelessly complicated and audacious plot. Even so, this conclusion is by no means a reflection upon the unquestionable patriotism of the vast majority of the Norwegian people. Events inside Holland, Belgium, and France soon served to demonstrate what intelligence must always recognize to be an inescapable fact about human beings. There is no nation in the world in which only one traitor can be found by conspirators as adept and diabolically cunning and persuasive as the disciples of Hitler, Himmler, Göring, and Goebbels. Indeed, Norwegians would have been close to supermen if there had not been among them one or several dozens of men who would serve the purposes of Quisling and his Nazi bosses. If such creatures could be limited to one or two thousand throughout the United States of America, we should be fortunate beyond all right of expectation.

In those days of Norway's desperate struggle for freedom there was little time in which to ruminate over the deeper significance of what we had seen in Oslo and why the Norwegians in that city reacted as they did. In due time what had then seemed to us an incredible resignation or a curious dependence upon outside help, if not a lack of fighting spirit, assumed proportions which were much more natural and explicable. Of course, the Osloans had been utterly dazed and bewildered by the Nazis' lightning occupation. They had no conception of the devastating Nazi technique of 'conquest from within'. The mass of the people did not dream that so-called German 'businessmen' and 'tourists' could be plotting in their midst. Norwegians had never harboured ill will or violent designs upon anybody. Oslo's citizens were undoubtedly more surprised at the Nazis' swift, bold invasion and occupation that April day than New Yorkers or Bostonians would probably be if it happened to them to-morrow.

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Under such circumstances it is dubious whether the populations of most American cities would have reacted in swift self-defence, though they might begin to weigh the implications of the event more swiftly. As for the people of Oslo, they had been conditioned by experience, education, and geography not to be prepared for armed resistance. Norwegians had never been involved in any kind of war for more than a hundred years. They had been educated to believe in pacifism and to place confidence in extremely progressive social reforms. They had been born and reared in the warm, comforting cloak of geographic immunity, just as is true of tens of millions of Americans who live between the snug ramparts of the Appalachian Mountains and the Rockies. In this sense the birthplaces of Senators Bennett Clark, La Follette, and Wheeler may be officially recorded in Missouri, Wisconsin, and Montana or thereabouts; but in reality all three of our leading isolationist senators were born and reared in a place called Geographic Immunity. This is why they should have an exceptional sympathy for the plight of Norway. But the Norwegian people, unlike Americans with memories of 1917-18, had never been obliged to consider seriously the possible necessity of going to war to defend their liberties. In a land where there were not even any grandfathers who were war veterans, people must have thought that the Scandinavian peninsula and a kind God had taken the scourge of international conflict out of their lives for ever. This explained the Norwegians' incapacity to understand and to face swiftly the brutal appearance of invasion.

After Oslo had fallen I remembered the confident declarations which both Norwegians and Swedes had made during the previous six months. 'We were neutral during the last war; of course we'll stay neutral this time.' As outside observers we could see very clearly that the Scandinavians were clutching an adder to their breasts. After all, Kaiser Wilhelm II never conceived one-fifth of the ideas that are in *Mein Kampf*, and the Kaiser never had either a Nazi Party of several million trained, fanatical henchmen, or a Gestapo. Just the same the Scandinavians clung to the perilous, un-

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tenable fallacy that this war was like the last one—something which most of us in all countries have done and many of us, beyond all sanity, continue to do. In Norway, as in England and elsewhere, a few realists had pleaded for several years for greatly increased defences with which to confront the Nazi menace, but Norwegian Socialists would never commit themselves to whole-hearted rearmament. All their lives Norwegians had been trained to put social security above national security. Their legislation had been admirably progressive—but it left a fatal loophole, because it failed utterly to provide the means through which these social reforms themselves could be adequately protected and so assured of continued existence. So the Norwegian military career officer had slight encouragement in his struggle to keep his country prepared, and much too little with which to fight when war came.

You could understand the Norwegians' costly trust in geographic immunity and in neutrality 'as the last time', and also their neglect of national defence forces, because these same things had prevailed in Holland, Belgium, and other countries. The effects of a hundred years of unbroken peace were more purely Scandinavian. In addition, however, it seemed to me that certain Norwegian characteristics had played a considerable part in their downfall and especially had made them vulnerable to the Nazis' Trojan-horse tactics. Ironically enough, perhaps the Norsemen over long centuries had become too much citizens of the world for this twentieth century, the century of death grapples between nationalism and internationalism. These Norsemen had forgotten what narrow nationalism means. They loved to travel the seven seas. They were broadminded and open to practical or attractive ideas, whether German, French, British, or what not. They were inclined, I suspect, to look for the good in foreigners and also for the pleasant and the entertaining in life. All this was extremely civilized—dangerously civilized for a century like ours. For as a consequence the Norsemen had long been excessively tolerant of foreigners in their midst, and perhaps too trusting and gullible and quite often open to flattery. Into such a friendly atmosphere and into such a



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receptive national mentality Hitler, Himmler, and Goebbels sent their suave and silk-tongued agents over a period of eight years or more. Some of these agents had been housed and cared for in Norway as war-refugee children between 1914 and 1919, and so spoke Norwegian fluently. Every Nazi, businessman or otherwise, knew exactly how to approach these Nordic people and how to exploit both their weaknesses and their goodwill. This more than anything else, I believe, is why the Nazis knew that their fantastic plot would be successful in Norway. They counted more on those who had been hoodwinked than on the comparative few who were capable of treason. Most of all they counted on and exploited the excessive tolerance in the Norwegian make-up. The Nazis counted on much the same things, some of them more exaggerated, in regard to Sweden, and with equal effectiveness.

I have been attempting to analyse the Norwegians. Now, to reverse the process, what did these experiences in Norway do to me? They provoked a very great change in my conception of the Second World War and my attitude toward its future developments. After all, there is no education quite so vivid as that which comes from things that happen to you or happen before your eyes. Eight days in Oslo and southern Norway gave me my first clear understanding of the terrific efficiency and speed of Hitler's war machine—and secondly, a spotlighted perception of the corroding, paralysing perfection of the Nazis' technique of conquest from within. As a correspondent who had spent years in Europe and had worked in Germany for several months during the first year of the Nazi régime, I thought I had a pretty realistic conception of the power and revolutionary tactics of Nazism. It was true I had not misjudged the menace or the aims of Brown Bolshevism. Like most of my colleagues I realized very early that Hitlerism meant war and nothing but war; and a small book of mine to that effect had first been published (and unheeded) in England in December 1933. But I had not been able to revisit Germany in these intervening seven years and accordingly could not begin to grasp the degree to which Nazi power and Nazi tactics had developed. In other words,

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even I, as an experienced foreign correspondent, did not begin to understand or appreciate the formidable revolutionary and military weapons which Nazi Germany had perfected over a period of seven years until I came face to face with these weapons, at the full flower of their destructive genius, in Norway. If this were true of myself in a most advantageous position, could it be any wonder that people in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Montana still could not see any danger to themselves in 'another European blood bath'? Was it surprising that men in the street, in the streets of France, Holland, Belgium, and England, so often could not believe until they saw it happen or until it happened to themselves?

In Oslo I had seen fifteen hundred German soldiers walk into a nation's capital, on foot and without a rifle raised to their shoulders, and take possession. I had seen a fantastically small and seriously exposed Nazi garrison hold this city for forty-eight hours and do it with calm assurance and with psychological ruses which were devilishly clever. I had been accosted by two German soldiers, alone and lost in the black-out, trying to find someone who could speak their language and tell them how to get to the telegraph office where they had been ordered to report. I had thought: 'Those fellows are damnably dependable.' I had seen Nazi troopers systematically pillaging white sheets, to be used as bandages for the wounded, from Oslo's department stores. I had ridden with and past the long field-grey columns which pushed out of Oslo, without pausing an unnecessary moment after debarkation. I had observed their staggering coolness, the methodical perfection with which they carried out every detail of their jobs, the sublime assurance and incredible speed with which they moved. I had seen the first body of troops ever to descend from the air and conquer a nation's capital. I had seen, in all its steel will and superb morale, the most devastatingly capable and powerful war machine that the modern world has ever known. Now at last I knew what the British and the French had to fight against; and as never before I realized how seriously great the odds were against them. I realized it and I wrote it—for whatever slight good it was likely to do.

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Even so the military lesson that I learned in southern Norway was of secondary significance to the lesson of the Nazis' Trojan horse. In Oslo we had witnessed the last days of peace and the first days of German conquest. During those final days before the bombers came, the web of the Nazi plot was being spun and tightened to a finished product all around us. We did not see the web, but we saw a good many of Hitler's agents who were very busy laying the concluding and vital threads. We noticed how active they were at the Grand Hotel and the Bristol. We were intrigued by the big Berlin boy friend with his fat brief-case and by his blond eyeful, for identical reasons but for a few additional ones in regard to the latter. It wasn't difficult to sense that the Nazis were working at something, and awfully fast. Then suddenly the unbelievable happened before our eyes and little by little we pieced together the chief mosaics of a stupendous conspiracy. It could never have happened save for three things --first, the complete freedom of operation enjoyed by Nazi agents inside Norway over a long period of time; secondly, the blind tolerant trustfulness of the majority of Norwegians, including high officialdom quite as much as the average citizen; thirdly, a minor element of collusion and treason.

I saw Quisling and I saw a few others who acted like lesser Quislings. When at last we had the rounded story of the forcing of Oslo fjord, from the lips of Norwegian naval men who were there, it was difficult to disagree with the comment of one sailor from Horten who declared bitterly: 'It's only because of treason that the Germans got through.' Yes, betrayal had been an essential and central element; in a plot of such vast dimensions it had to be. But that was not the only cause for the inner conquest of southern Norway. The Nazis had used terrorism, with the showing of their film of the Polish Blitzkrieg as a final fillip. For months and years before that German 'salesmen' and all kinds of 'businessmen' had used honeyed persuasion, easy-profits persuasion, political propaganda, pressure tactics, intimidation—every conceivable method to convert Norwegians in key positions into pro-Nazis or outright Nazis. How many influential Norsemen

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they actually bribed was of no particular importance. The only vital thing was the fact that Hitler's plotters lined up just enough persons in strategic places to make them absolutely confident that Oslo fjord could be penetrated without any resistance—in any case, swiftly and successfully—and the capital would be theirs. If the Nazis only procured the assured co-operation of half a dozen men, that was all that mattered, provided they were in the right places and could open doors to the central controls of naval and military defence. By two minor slip-ups, the unexpected action of the *Olaf Trygvason* and the point-blank discharge of Oskarborg's guns, the arrival of German transport ships in Oslo harbour was delayed forty-eight hours. Yet despite this miscarriage the occupation of Oslo was swiftly completed because the Trojan horse had been built with most diversified elements, not the least being the spread of confusion and the sowing of defeatism from within.

For all these reasons Oslo stood as a cruel object lesson to all free governments and peoples quite as much as to an American correspondent who happened to be on the spot. This was the perfect plot and the perfect betrayal. It was conquest from within in the superlative degree, achieved by a ruthless and conscienceless technique for the spreading of internal paralysis and disintegration. For eight months now the world had been repeatedly speculating about Hitler's secret weapon. Did Hitler really have a secret weapon? Yes, now I knew that he had one and I knew what it was. Truly it operated secretly and through all kinds of agents—the secret and invisible warfare of the Trojan horse and the fifth column. Would the British and the French be strong enough to ward off and nullify this kind of total warfare from inside? Well, for that matter, and providing Nazism had ample time in which to choose its own ground and select its own zero hour, what kind of chance would even the American people have against it? After Oslo I understood quite clearly how utterly different this kind of war really was and is. Beside the Brown Bolsheviks Joseph Stalin's Red ones now looked like clumsy, rank amateurs.

## *Chapter 6*

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**O**n 20 April British and French expeditionary forces were reported to be fighting their way southward from Namsos with the capture of Trondheim their immediate objective. Bill Stoneman, who knew all the ins and outs of Scandinavia, had sent me word from London via Chicago that if I got up to Storlien I might be able to meet the Allied troops when they cut across from Trondheim to that Swedish frontier post on Norway's narrow waistline. It was a good tip, save for two drawbacks. In Stockholm I had much more reason to feel dubious about Anglo-French forces reaching Trondheim in a hurry than anyone could have in London. Moreover, a whole flock of correspondents already waited hopefully at Storlien, where the Swedish authorities refused to let them proceed into Norway.

This explained why the following evening found me at Gäddede, another Swedish frontier post, about a hundred miles north of Storlien and roughly six hundred miles from Stockholm. My assignment was to join the British and French expeditionary forces as quickly as possible and that was just what I wanted. So I had decided to gamble on taking the long way round. It happened that the road over the mountain pass from Gäddede had been opened only the day before and I had stumbled on one of the few men who knew about that. Maybe I could get down to the Namsos-Trondheim sector before any of the American, British, French, and Scandinavian correspondents at Storlien learned about the back-door route. But three journalists from the three largest Stockholm newspapers and Paul Mylander, a Swedish photographer, were on the same bus going into Gäddede. We had

to hire two cars anyway. I teamed up with a good-looking chap named Knutsson (of the *Stockholms Tidningen*, as I remember it), and Mylander fell in with correspondents from the *Svenska Dagbladet* and the *Dagens Nyheter*. At the border Knutsson and I also picked up two Norwegians who said they were going home to enlist. One was and, as we later discovered, the other wasn't. I had cause eventually to doubt whether he was a Norwegian, but to feel fairly confident he was a spy, whatever else he might be. Anyway we had a rollicking Swedish constable for a driver and he was a good one—exactly what we needed with night falling and sixty miles of newly dug-out mountain roads to traverse. At the top of the pass beyond Siberien (a most appropriately named spot) our car churned its way between walls of snow which were fifteen feet high. At the end of April this looked like an awful lot of snow, but when we hit the Norwegian valley far below, there was nothing but ruts of slush and mud. It was like that all the way down to the crossroads hamlet of Formofoss.

When we reached Formofoss it was midnight. We found a big white farmhouse which also served as a country hotel. We decided to sleep a few hours and start on again at five o'clock to find the British and French forces. A Norwegian, who had just come up from Lake Snäsa, told us he thought some British troops were down below somewhere, toward Steinkjer on the Trondheim road. He said quite a lot of German planes had been over during the day and many bombs had been dropped. When I couldn't pin him down to anything definite I went to bed, leaving a call for 4 a.m. and leaving the Stockholm journalist still talking with the excited fellow from Snäsa. We had to get to the Allied troops. That was the only real story, and Mylander and the other two Swedes were somewhere ahead of us. Better store up a little sleep and then move fast at daybreak, I thought. I had stored up just about twenty minutes' worth when I was shaken back to consciousness. The shaking was vigorous and the accompanying words were more so.

'Get up, Stowe! For God's sake, hurry up! We've got to get out of here. We've got to get out of here right away.'

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'Get out of here?' I sat up in bed, blinking dazedly at Knutsson. 'What's the—'

'Listen, Stowe. I tell you we've got to get out. The Germans have bombed Grong. They burned Steinkjer to the ground this afternoon. They've blasted Namsos to pieces. They'll be here at daybreak and—'

'Well, what if they are? We'll be on our way south. Where are the British?'

'I don't know about the British. But listen. Don't be a damned fool. I tell you the Germans are machine-gunning everyone on the roads. They're machine-gunning women and children. If we stay here we'll all be killed. Our driver is ready. Get dressed and we'll start now.'

'Start for where?'

'For Gåddede, of course. The Norwegian downstairs will go with us. We can be back there and telephone our stories before noon.'

'Telephone our stories? What stories? Are you crazy, Knutsson?'

'But you don't understand. The Norwegian from Snåsa knows all about the bombings. We can get the whole story from him on the way out. Only we've got to—'

'Listen, Knutsson. If you want to take our car, okay. I came down here to join the British or the French, and I'm not going out before I've seen an Englishman or even a Norwegian soldier.'

'I tell you you're mad, Stowe. You'll be killed. They're machine-gunning everybody. They'll be fighting right here to-morrow. Why, listen to those troop trains going by—'

'Troop trains?' I cried, leaping out of bed. 'Whose troop trains? Where?'

'Sure, those are British troop trains going by at the crossing. They've been going by all night.'

'For God's sake, why didn't you say so?' By this time I was pretty angry and hauling on my sweater and coat, having gone to bed half-dressed. 'If those are troop trains I'll hop a ride with the British down the valley. Come on. Let's go and find out.'

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'But you can't go near the station. We'll be shot,' objected my Swedish colleague. I hurried downstairs and out into the night, paying no further attention to his remonstrances. The railroad passed only a hundred and fifty yards away. Knutsson followed cautiously behind me at a distance of about fifteen paces. When we reached the tracks there was not a sign or sound of a train, but two old Norwegian farmers—each armed with a shotgun—were standing guard by the bridge just beyond. They challenged us, but Knutsson managed finally to ask the important questions. The farmers said not a single train had passed on this line all night or throughout the previous day. What my companion had mistaken for troop trains had been the roar of the mountain river below. He debated with me vainly on the way back to the farmhouse. I paid my share for the hire of our car and Knutsson explained that the Norwegian was abandoning his automobile, so I could use it in the morning if I could find someone to drive it. With that we said good-bye and I went to bed.

The old fellow who managed the farmhouse found a chauffeur for me in the morning. He was a young Norwegian who spoke only a few words of English and German, but he had steady nerves and he was willing. So we started south for Steinkjer which lay at the far end of some fifty miles of the slushiest, muddiest roads in creation. Half-way down we had to report at a Norwegian brigade headquarters where a British liaison officer, about to depart, said I'd have to go back to Namsos to report at General Carton de Wiart's headquarters. The brigade was posted in a huge farmhouse. Someone warned that Nazi planes were coming. We went down in the cellar and heard the motors roar loudly just above the house. If a spy had tipped the Germans off—we would know in three seconds. The Nazis would never miss a chance to wipe out an entire brigade headquarters staff. The planes went by. The Norwegians had been wisely careful about leaving no cars standing outside. Then we backtracked almost fifty miles, nearly to Namsos. We had to check in at a gendarmerie centre, and while there another German bomber passed over



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very low. A Norwegian naval commander told us Namsos was too hot a place to-day. We absolutely could not pass. We must return to Formofoss and I should wait there until some British officers got in touch with me. I had no intention of waiting for anybody to look me up in a war zone, so at Formofoss I boldly motioned southward again and said: 'Steinkjer' as if I meant it. My young driver had the true Viking spirit. We ploughed steadily through the ruts all the way to Snäsa and took the right-hand road along the lake. Transport trucks had churned it into ruts two feet deep, which were nothing but channels swimming with water from the fast-melting April snow. We got stuck again and again. Once we were stuck out in the open, with the lake on one side and a straight rock cliff behind us, when a lone bomber appeared. We hugged the rocks. A minute later half a dozen explosions echoed and re-echoed. They had bombed the Snäsa railroad station about half a mile behind us. All around us the expanse of ice and the groves of spruce trees and the blinding snow shone beautifully in the sunshine. This Norwegian countryside was magnificent. Except for the echoing crump of the bombs it seemed the most peaceful place on earth.

Soon we came to a stretch of road where men were digging desperately and piling fir branches in the sea of mud to make it passable. But our car was bogged in the mud, flat on its axle now. The workmen said nothing but heavy trucks could grind their way through. So I paid my life-saving driver liberally, grabbed my typewriter, and crawled into a British Red Cross ambulance half a mile ahead. The colonel in command was a heavy-built man in his late fifties, a dynamo of the old school. 'Simply terrible roads—worst I've ever seen in twenty-five years of this kind of work,' he sputtered. But he told me British troops were quartered at Kvam and their battalion headquarters were some miles below at Asp. He'd get me through as far as Kvam with his six ambulances and cars, providing anybody could get through. Soon we were plunging through soft, hip-deep snow into a thick stand of spruce. The two German bombers had headed straight for us. We could only stagger about fifty feet into the woods, several

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Norwegian nurses and half a dozen men. We were just about far enough from the line of cars to have an excellent chance of being hit if they dropped anything. The planes went directly over our heads at no more than six hundred feet, but they respected the Red Cross flags on the top of the ambulances. Finally, late in the afternoon, we reached Kvam and whom should I see—lugging his camera along the road—but Paul Mylander. Paul had worked for several years in New York, which accounted for his remarkable command of American slang, but he was as hardy and dauntless a Swede as ever lived.

'You know what those bums did?' exploded Paul. 'They turned around about two o'clock this morning and beat it back for Gäddede. Sure, they left me there in the snow somewhere above Snäsa. I said: "To hell with you guys. You can run home if you want to. I'll walk, you god-dam fools." Oh, I told them plenty, all right. Sure, they just left me without a car and without a flashlight in the middle of the night on that bitch of a road. . . . Had they seen any troops yet? Hell, no. They hadn't seen nothing. They just heard that Snäsa and Steinkjer had been bombed. . . . So Knutsson did the same thing? My God, did you ever see such a lousy bunch of——. Probably they're telephoning big stories from Gäddede now. Eyewitness stories about Steinkjer in flames and Namsos in ruins. And those guys call themselves reporters. What the hell would those dopes do if they had to take pictures?'

Later we learned what vivid descriptions of destruction in Namsos and Steinkjer were published at that time by the *Stockholms Tidningen*, *Svenska Dagbladet*, and *Dagens Nyheter*; descriptions written by journalists who had never been within thirty or forty miles of either town. We also learned that Barbro Alving, likewise of the *Dagens Nyheter*, had been the first correspondent to join the British in the Namsos sector. She had even been in Steinkjer the day before it was bombed. You could always count on Barbro. She and Kurt Andersson of Stockholm's *Socialdemokraten* had proved themselves worth a baker's dozen of the run-of-the-mill Swedish journalists who

had come to Finland; and two or three others, out of a score or more, had been only a few paces behind these two. But to-day neither Paul nor I was inclined to weep over the precipitate departure of our former travellers, whatever headlines they might get in the Stockholm press. After all, the Stockholm press had been responsible for a large proportion of the fairy-tales which had emanated from Finland during the war. Maybe we should thank our stars for being alone, just the two of us. We were with the British expeditionary force at last. It looked as if we might have the story and the pictures to ourselves.

British troops were bivouacked here in the houses which were strung along the main road at Kvam. The first men we talked with acted as if they were under considerable strain and one of the first things they said was: 'What we need are planes, and planes as fast as we can get them.' Yes, they had landed at Namsos about a week ago. Yes, the front was somewhere below Steinkjer. No, they couldn't say how many troops the British had here now. You'd have to inquire at battalion headquarters at Asp. No, only a few miles down the road. Yes, you ought to be able to hitch a ride all right. . . . So Mylander and I found ourselves at Asp, persuading a handsome, tired-eyed British major to give us passes to go into Steinkjer, which had just been plastered by Nazi planes a couple of hours earlier. But it would soon be dark. There was just a long chance that Paul could still get his pictures. Our borrowed car splashed, sloshed, and careened southward as fast as any human being could drive it under such conditions. In twenty-five minutes we rounded a curve on the brow of a hill and suddenly looked down upon a masterpiece of the twentieth century's newest art. There, along the tip of the fjord and tucked in the slanting palm of the spruce-covered, snowbound hills, lay the blackened and burning skeleton of Steinkjer.

Until Sunday, which was yesterday, some four thousand peaceful Norwegians had lived here and no war had touched this town in several hundred years. Now not a soul remained inside Steinkjer. We looked down into the centre of the

town upon the scarred black fingers of scores of chimneys. To our right tongues of fire darted skyward along the water-front and billows of black smoke obscured the ice beyond.

A young British soldier, a Scot, was standing guard where the road dipped down into the town. Of course we had heard the shooting. The crisp crackle of machine-gun fire seemingly came from the hills below and beyond the smoking ruins. Sometimes a cannon boomed and the echoes rolled back and forth bafflingly. 'The Jerries have got a destroyer or something over there and are shelling from the fjord,' the soldier said, after he had examined our pass. 'If you're going down into the town you'd better not stay there long. It's getting hot on the other side there.' We climbed into the car. 'Don't stay longer than just time enough to take the pictures,' he warned. We had only a couple of hundred yards to go. It was after eight o'clock and would be dark very soon.

As Paul went to work with his camera I counted eight fires blazing at the end of streets near the waterfront. Rubble and black ruins were on all sides of us. The odour, mixed with the smell of hundreds of burned out buildings, gathered thickly in our nostrils. It was everywhere, heavy and repulsive. The Nazis had used plenty of incendiaries all right. We remained for more than half an hour. Then the dusk was too deep for any more pictures. Meanwhile the gun-fire was snapping more and more viciously in the woods and on the hill just beyond the town, and every few minutes another shell rocked the twilight. The British must be getting it pretty heavy over there now. Well, we'd have to check up on that at headquarters.

At the top of the hill the Scots corporal was still standing guard alone and he came up to us with anxiety unconcealed on his face.

'You're going back to battalion headquarters, aren't you?' he asked. 'Listen. This is terribly important. Please see Major Godfrey or Major Sinclair right away. Tell them the fighting is getting nearer all the time. Tell them only one lorry has come through. Say I'm waiting for instructions—that I'm

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still waiting for instructions and I need them immediately. Tell any officer you see. Go as fast as you can.'

We were off, Paul exclaiming: 'My God, it looks like they're in a helluva mess, doesn't it?' Yes, it did. The machine-guns were crackling madly and louder as we dashed off, up the road toward Asp. There could be no doubt that the Germans were attacking and the British were being driven back; but perhaps not seriously so yet. You couldn't tell, except for the reactions of that Scots corporal. And why had only one lorry come through? In the centre of Asp village several trucks were lined up, half-filled with soldiers, but there didn't seem to be any spark-plug to what they were doing. Someone helped us find the major. He was stretched out in a chair with his army coat over his face. When he stood up we knew he certainly hadn't been in bed for three or four nights. He listened gravely to the message, thanked us warmly, and went out to give orders to get the trucks moving. Even then there was no precision or drive about the way things moved. These were Territorials, fine, gentlemanly-looking young fellows. The only trouble was that, as I looked at them, I kept thinking of those hard-faced, machine-like professional soldiers I had seen in field-grey uniforms in Oslo and southern Norway. Beside those German veterans these fellows looked like boy scouts. The contrast merely heightened an acutely uncomfortable feeling which had been growing on me all afternoon. So far we had seen only a few hundred British troops at most.

Paul and I knew the major had many more important things to do than talk with us, so we chatted with some of the soldiers without learning anything of any consequence. Then we started back up the road toward Kvam, where the Red Cross colonel had been assembling his cots in a movie hall, designed to become a base hospital. As we rode I scratched in my notebook: 'Trondheim won't be captured soon.' But I didn't begin to know how true that was at that time. We drove on until we must have been twenty miles from Steinkjer and, having lost more than an hour at Asp, it was now half-past ten at night. Frequently we got stuck in mudholes

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and sometimes caught in a jam behind other cars which were bogged down. Finally we had to halt again, this time behind a truck full of soldiers. A British lieutenant jumped off the truck and came back to us. We could see his agitation in his walk and on his face. When I hailed him and explained I was an American newspaperman, he burst forth in a torrent of words.

'We've been massacred—simply massacred. It's the planes. We've got no planes. The Jerries have been bombing us all afternoon—and shelling us on our right flank from the fjord. It's been bloody awful, I tell you. . . . Yes, we were fighting in front of Steinkjer, at Vist. We only had one battalion of 600. I think we must have had over 200 killed or wounded. I don't know how many we've got left. Maybe 150. We're fleeing. We're going north. We hope to re-form up there somewhere. There's nothing else to do.'

Paul and I listened in stupefied amazement. We had left Steinkjer only a couple of hours before. These men had been fighting below Steinkjer. Now they were ahead of us, north-bound on the road, and miles beyond their own battalion headquarters. They must have come right through Asp without stopping. Things must be in an awful state. . . . But another Britisher, a non-com, was talking feverishly now: 'The Jerries would send over six planes. They'd drop signal flares. Then their artillery, on the destroyer in the fjord, knew all our positions. Then the Jerries would come back with bombs. We've got no anti-aircraft guns and we have no field pieces. We could hear our wounded crying in the woods, but we couldn't get to them. It was bloody hell. . . .' Now the lieutenant cut in once more: 'We've got no proper clothes for these mountains. We've got no white capes. The Jerries could see us everywhere in the snow. They just mowed our men down.'

Now half a dozen survivors of the battle at Vist were pouring forth the incredible details of their disaster. They said only two British battalions had been landed at Namsos, a battalion of Territorials and another battalion of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. Only one battalion had been in

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this engagement, and their officers thought at least one company had been cut off and captured. 'It was just a bloody slaughter and it got worse after dark. There was nothing we could do but get out.' I asked the lieutenant how long he had been in service. He replied that he'd been in since March of the previous year. 'We're not regulars,' he said. 'I'm glad you're a reporter. For God's sake, tell them we've got to have airplanes and anti-aircraft guns. Tell them everything we've said. That's the only thing that will do any good.' I asked the lieutenant where the French were. 'We don't know where the French are. We haven't seen any. We have no contacts,' he said.

Now the road was cleared once more and the line of cars was starting forward in the night. But the forced halts were frequent and at each pause we talked with the British soldiers in the truck ahead of us. They all had the same story, the same bitterness, and the same cry: 'For God's sake why don't they give us planes?' No wonder the Nazi bombers had been having such a holiday along the Namsos-Snåsa-Steinkjer road all day. Everything was very clear now. It was not only a defeat; it was a rout, and behind the rout lay a colossal, almost unbelievable blunder. But these men were the victims. They *knew*.

Our borrowed car had done us noble service, but we had to shift for ourselves again now. Two Norwegian officers took us into their automobile. They confirmed the fact that the British forces, first landed in the Namsos sector, had not exceeded fifteen hundred men at the most. 'We have three thousand men and we've been holding the line on the eastern side of Lake Snåsa,' the Norse captain said. 'To-night our men are taking over the defence, replacing the remnants of the British battalion. I've never seen a single British field gun or anti-aircraft gun. I don't know what in the devil the British command has been thinking about. This is worse than if they had done nothing. Within a week the Germans will have all this territory along here. We can't possibly hold them off without planes.' That reminded me of another remark of the British lieutenant: 'It's just like the Russians against the

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Finns, only worse—and we are the Finns.' But the Norwegian captain was still pouring forth the wormwood of his disillusionment. 'I've never seen one Frenchman. They were reported to be at Grong, but when I went through there yesterday, I didn't see a soul. . . . Now the British have lost the war in Norway. Why didn't they land ten thousand troops here a week ago, before the German bombers came? . . . And why did they land troops in Namsos without any anti-aircraft guns to protect their landing? We Norwegians have no artillery and no planes up here. What can we do?'

Once when we stopped and looked back, the sky behind us was lurid with flames. A number of buildings were now burning along the road where we had come. Probably the Nazis had bombed the battalion headquarters at Asp. The Red Cross colonel would be moving his hospital equipment out of Kvam as quickly as he had brought it in. After all that gallant battle against mud, snow, and water it would be enough to break a man's heart; but obviously there could now be no base hospital at Kvam. Probably the Germans would be there to-morrow. A few hundred disheartened men with machine-guns couldn't possibly hold them back for very long.

Now the road was impassable for the Norse captain's car. Paul and I were escorted into a farmhouse beside the road. We rolled up in our coats on the floor, but I lay shivering and scarcely slept at all. We were up soon after five, waiting for the dairyman's wife to make some coffee. Paul turned on the radio in the living-room and got London. The voice of a B.B.C. announcer, round and full and most genteel, suddenly filled the room. 'British expeditionary forces are pressing forward steadily from all points where they have landed in Norway,' the voice said. 'Allied troops have taken ——. Resistance has been shattered along the railroad. In the Namsos sector British and French are advancing successfully toward Trondheim, where German forces may soon be isolated.' This was exactly what the B.B.C. was telling us, there in that Norwegian farmhouse some thirty miles from the scene of the



**British Territorials' crushing defeat near Steinkjer, on that Tuesday morning, 23 April.**

'Jesus Christ,' said Paul. 'What's the matter with those mugs? Are they crazy?'

'No, no, Paul. Not at all. You forget that this programme is sponsored by British Empire Soothing Syrup, Limited.'

'Limited my eye! Unlimited—that's what you mean.'

But Paul and I had our pictures and our story, and we were off on the long trek for Gæddede and the Swedish frontier. We heard a truck roaring by and I sprinted down the road, ankle-deep in mud, yelling for it to stop. By some miracle the driver heard me. When we climbed in we found a young English corporal hunched in the front seat. His face was like cigarette paper. He had two bullets through his left shoulder and had been riding over these hellish roads all night. In the confused withdrawal from Vist he had stumbled down from the railroad track and a Norwegian had mistaken him for a German. The bullets had been high and missed his heart by a few inches. The truck lurched and whammed, and the corporal bounced back and forth, hanging on with his right hand. There were patches of dry blood on his face. For four hours the motor growled and groaned and we crawled along through two and a half feet of mud and water, over the slimiest, back-breakingest apology for a road I have ever seen. Sometimes the corporal winced with pain, but he never complained. He was from Lincolnshire and he had a world of guts. Whenever we got stuck I climbed out of the open rear chasis and talked with him. His story was of the same kind.

'We were taken by surprise,' he said. 'We thought the enemy was much farther down. Then we had to rush about and do the best we could. The Jerries were in the woods right ahead of us; but we managed to find not a bad position, where the Jerries had to come through deep snow. We sent one company to hold them while we got what position we could. At first that was all right. Then we heard the Jerries had a cruiser and a destroyer in the upper fjord. You know, it goes right up to Steinkjer and it's open water most of the

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way. But the Jerries in the woods had four-inch mortars, too; and then the destroyer got round a neck of land and began shelling us straight on our right flank. The German bombers came over at the same time.'

'You didn't have any guns?'

'Oh, no. We've got no artillery with us, none at all. That was what finished us. We were getting it from the Jerries in front of us, from the bombers above us, and from the destroyer in the fjord. Then the Jerries came running from the woods and encircled one of our companies. We saw them running, but we didn't shoot because we thought it was our men—that our boys had taken the Jerries. Instead, it was the other way round. It got worse and worse. We had a lot of our boys killed and wounded. When it got dark those of us who were left had to get out as fast as we could. If only we'd had the stuff we could have wiped Jerry out completely. What's the matter with people in London?'

It was the same old story, but it came with peculiar force from a little lance corporal from Lincolnshire with two bullet-holes in his shoulder. Paul and I finally helped deliver the corporal and a very badly wounded British private at an emergency hospital in Snäsa. Then we hitch-hiked back to Formofoss.

The sky was spitting snow, so there were no Nazi planes that afternoon. In one spot our path was blocked by ten abandoned trucks, some of them petrol trucks. The first of these had been left smack in the middle of the road. A tiny bullet-hole through the window of the third truck's wind-shield told why. The plane had come over several hours earlier, but none of the drivers had yet returned. We sweated, dug, and tugged trying to budge the truck. After an hour and a half someone rounded up several of the truck-drivers. Apparently it had not occurred to them to continue with their mission after the plane had disappeared.

At Formofoss we found the enterprising and fearless little Betty Wason of Columbia Broadcasting, she whom Fred Hibbard christened 'Demi-Tasse' months later in Bucharest. Betty had fought her way over the mountains alone and was

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the second American to get down into the Namsos sector. She had been in a bombing at Grong—and she had a broadcast scheduled for the next night in Stockholm. The three of us set out, perched on top of a load of material on the back of a truck bound for Nordli, up near the Swedish frontier. The pass was reported snowed in again. A Swedish ambulance corps was trying to get through and we were told we'd have to wait, because we couldn't possibly pass them on the road. We spent the night at a half-way house on the mountainside. It was filled with refugees and there was only a little coffee and bread in the place. Paul snored on the floor while I tried to write a lead to my story. I was too tired to think and had to give it up. Paul snored as happily as a cub bear, but I couldn't sleep. It was one of the longest nights I have ever lived. The ambulances still had not appeared by nine in the morning. We had to battle fiercely to persuade our truck-driver to go on, but he had a weakness for Betty and he sang jazz tunes to her all the way up the mountain.

Finally the truck bogged down so badly we left our bags and started on afoot, slipping and puffing over the wet snow. I don't know how many miles we liked, but my typewriter got heavier and heavier. At last we reached the bald clefted forehead of the pass. Nearly two hundred men were still digging there, reopening the last few hundred yards. At Siberien we telephoned to the sheriff of Nordli and that noble gentleman rescued us in his car, delivering us to the frontier station at Gäddede. According to new Swedish precautions, no foreigner could remain in Gäddede overnight, so we had to hire a car and drive until three-thirty in the morning to reach Östersund. By that time Paul and I had had two meals in four days and I had slept less than seven hours in the past ninety-six. But we had some pictures and a story which might be of considerable interest to the outside world, and we now knew beyond any likelihood of contradiction that the Allies had bungled their campaign in Norway irretrievably.

This had been foreshadowed from the very beginning by the manner in which the Allied governments had mishandled

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the Norwegian campaign, and particularly by the way in which the British air force had been misused or unused. During the first forty-eight hours after the small German garrison occupied Oslo it was incomprehensible that British planes were not sent to explore the strength of the Germans and to bomb Fornebu airport. A German colonel later told Edmund Stevens: 'What we feared most was a lightning reprisal by the British. If they had struck then, our whole expedition would have ended in disaster.' He added, with a smile: 'Fortunately, one can always count upon the British to arrive too late.' But throughout those first forty-eight hours, while British bombing was concentrated on Stavanger on the coast, even fifty or sixty R.A.F. bombers could have completely isolated the few Germans who had managed to land at Fornebu. On the third day British bombers could have intercepted and destroyed the seven troop ships, with their cargo of twenty thousand men, as they crept up Oslo fjord. But for some incomprehensible reason the British did not bomb Fornebu until almost two weeks later, and then the B.B.C. announced it quite proudly—blissfully overlooking the fact that Fornebu had been an absolutely essential target from the first day of the invasion.

In the same fashion a golden opportunity to capture Trondheim was lost by London in the first days of the war. At that time the Nazis had only a few hundred men in Trondheim, and their cruiser and destroyers, inside the fjord, would have been wonderful meat for bombing planes. If Norway were to be kept in the war, the Allies were compelled to hold Trondheim; otherwise all of central and southern Norway would be lost. They also must possess the airports outside of Trondheim. Therefore an immediate naval and aerial concerted onslaught upon the skimpy German forces in Trondheim was dictated by the most elementary strategy, and the reasons for it would appear obvious to any layman. But the paralysing effect of the 'wait-and-see' war attitude at home apparently killed all initiative in the R.A.F. command and prevented the indispensable co-ordination between all three of the Allied armed forces. The Germans had

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co-ordination, superb efficiency, a plan of action, and remarkable boldness. The British and the French governments, as every intelligent observer had known for months, had not the slightest acquaintance with any of these qualities. So brave British boys found themselves in the mud and snows of the Namsos sector without a single airplane, without a single piece of artillery, and without one anti-aircraft cannon—and many of them were now dead. Norway itself was virtually lost. In another week all that remained of the Allied expeditionary force north of Trondheim had embarked from Namsos, defeated and discouraged and without a spark of faith left in the man who had lost the peace at Munich and was now losing the war.

What was it that the young Conservative M.P. had said to me in London about 'little short of a major disaster would make it possible to get rid of Neville Chamberlain'? Well, Steinkjer was a disaster, all right. Maybe this was even big enough to jar the British people out of their costly self-complacency. Maybe there is enough dynamite here even to rock to Downing Street? Maybe this is just about the most important and constructive story you've ever filed for a newspaper at any time in your life. You've got all the facts. Don't pull any punches. Remember that little Lincolnshire corporal with the bullets in his shoulder, and the chap in the ambulance who probably died on an operating-table at Snäsa. You could see it all coming back in September 1939. Nobody had to have more than a minimum of horse sense to know things like this were bound to happen. What else could anybody expect on the record? Well, the roost has been waiting much too long now and there's plenty of room. Make way for Mr. Chamberlain's chickens! Here they come, ladies and gentlemen. If you don't like their tail-feathers or the way they tweep-tweep, it's just too bad. Yes, it's a crying, God-awful shame—but the chickens are hatched now, and perhaps there will be more to come.

A few days later, back in Stockholm, I had a telephone call from a secretary in the British legation. I didn't wait for him to make a diplomatic approach. 'I imagine some of your folks

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in London are pretty riled over my story about Steinkjer,' I said. 'But, quite frankly, I believe I've done the British cause the greatest service I've ever had the opportunity of rendering.'

I was agreeably surprised at the secretary's reply.

'Well, speaking with equal frankness, Mr. Stowe, I'm inclined to believe that you are entirely correct.'

## *Chapter 7*

### THE HIGH COST OF NEUTRALITY

**W**hen I first visited Stockholm in the second month of the war I gave myself one particular assignment. I wanted to find out what the war was doing to a typical neutral country like Sweden. Within a week the general economic picture shaped up quite clearly. It seemed that the Swedes had had a war boom in advance of the actual war. This was largely a Hitler-made boom because Germany's orgy of re-armament precipitated ever increasing purchases of Swedish machinery, Swedish steel, iron ore, and mechanical wood pulp. During the first eight months of 1939 all records of Swedish exports of these materials were broken, even surpassing the previous peak year of 1929. Sweden also had a big building boom, and this largest and richest Scandinavian land was flushed with prosperity. But the European conflict dealt the Swedes a heavy blow at its very start. In the first month Sweden lost fifteen per cent of its foreign trade, while new millions were voted for national defence and new and heavier taxes became inevitable. For 6,285,000 Swedes an era of prosperity and contentment had suddenly ended. They were compelled to adjust themselves once more to submarine blockades and the straitjacket of war-time economy. Simultaneously their chief problem became the eternal struggle to maintain Sweden's neutrality.

In those October days Stockholm wore a deceptive, almost heedless cape of gaiety. You got the impression that such a pleasant life as this must be outside the reaches of war; that optimism had long reigned in this beautiful city and that most people hoped for the best. Sweden had stayed out of the last war, so of course she must stay out of this one. Neverthe-

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less many a Swede was tormented by secret doubts, while all Swedes could feel their world being narrowed and walled in by the war. People speculated especially about Germany and Russia. On a street car one Swedish workman was overheard remarking to another: 'Well, if the Germans should come in, I wouldn't mind it so much. But if the Russians come in we'll shoot them all.' Whereas it was difficult for Swedes to think of Germans as Nazi revolutionaries, even the mass of Swedish Socialists nursed a profound distrust of Stalin's motives and an acute dislike for Soviet Russia. After all, Bolshevik Russia had constituted the pet bugaboo of progressive, democratic, bourgeois Sweden for more than twenty years. This was why it became impossible for Sweden to remain completely aloof and strictly neutral when the Red army had invaded Finland. The Swedes realized immediately—as one of their prominent bankers, Marcus Wallenberg, Jr., so truly said—that 'Finland, in fighting her glorious war, was also defending Sweden's vital interests'. As a result Sweden became the first country during the second world conflict to practise a policy of 'all aid short of war'. The same policy which the United States pursued in regard to Great Britain, from the capitulation of France into the spring of 1941, was first attempted by Sweden in regard to the embattled Finns. The Swedes tried everything they possibly could do, short of war, but it was not sufficient.

What did the Swedes do for Finland and why did it fail? Had it not been for large supplies of absolutely essential Swedish war materials Finnish resistance would certainly have been broken much sooner. Swedish gifts, in cash and kind, poured into Finland in a generous flood and much in the same fashion as America's first lease-and-lend shipments to Britain. Their total is officially placed at more than 145,629,000 kroner, a very large sum for a country with a population as small as that in Sweden. But there came a time, in February, 1940, when gifts and loans could not possibly save the Mannerheim Line, and the Finnish government asked Stockholm for two regular army divisions. For the Swedes that threatened to mean what outright conveying



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meant to the American people some fourteen months later. It was the end of the road for 'all aid short of war', but Sweden's governors still clung desperately to such shreds of neutrality as yet remained. Nazi spokesmen had long been warning them that the Finnish war must be kept 'localized' and had deliberately fanned Swedish fears of a possible German intervention. If Sweden had dispatched regular army units camouflaged as 'volunteers' (after Nazi and Fascist methods employed throughout the Spanish war), perhaps Hitler would have looked the other way. But perhaps Nazi threats would have been fulfilled. For Sweden the risk was great. Stockholm refused to send two army divisions, and a few weeks later Finland's Mannerheim Line was hopelessly smashed. The Swedes had done a great deal, but they had stopped half-way. More than anything else, Finland fell for lack of Scandinavian unity and for lack of an outright military alliance with those northern neighbouring nations who were her natural allies—peoples whose democratic existence had as much to suffer from the Soviet system's western expansion as was true of the Finns themselves.

When Germany invaded Norway two months later, the opportunity for a united Scandinavian front had already been lost in Finland. As the largest and strongest northern country, leadership for the creation of such a front inevitably depended upon Sweden, just as protective leadership in the Western Hemisphere must come from the United States. In the winter of 1940, however, such leadership could not be taken by Sweden without boldly assuming the gravest risk, perhaps the inescapable necessity of going to war. Since the Swedes had to face the possibility of Nazi attack, they were caught in a most cruel dilemma. Then, having decided that the risk in Finland was too great to be assumed, Sweden was suddenly confronted with a yet more terrible danger as Nazi troops battered the ill-equipped Norwegians just across her frontier. At that juncture the Stockholm government reverted to a policy of 'strict neutrality'. The Norwegians needed guns and munitions just as badly as the Finns had needed them, but the Nazis' cocked pistols and poised bombers were

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now so near and menacing that Sweden (in order to cling to such peace as still remained) felt compelled to refuse Norway's appeals for aid. Stockholm agreed to supply no weapons to either Germany or Norway. With that Sweden's technical isolation was complete. Any other choice would have meant war, bloodshed, and destruction on Swedish soil. For generations the Swedes had been the spoiled children of European geography. Now geography had turned upon them and trapped them. In Finland there had been a long chance for an inspiring and galvanizing Swedish leadership among the Scandinavian peoples—a long chance and a dangerous one, yet still a chance. Now, with Norwegians looking vainly to Sweden for help, Sweden's greatest opportunity to speak for all three northern nations had disappeared for an indeterminate number of years.

After having placed their chief reliance upon neutrality for many decades, the Swedes suddenly discovered that the Second World War was a different kind of war and that the only neutrality left for them was one which pinched their souls while imposing an enormous drain upon their pocket-books and their bodies. In a very real sense the moral blow to Sweden was even more severe than the physical and material consequences. Something which had begun as a benevolent isolationism had been twisted and hammered down, under the ruthless strokes of Soviet and Nazi aggressions on both sides of Sweden, into a tight and rigid straitjacket. Sweden, as from May 1940, was hopelessly isolated. On all important essentials neither Swedish governmental actions nor Swedish economic life could deviate from those courses which were recommended or frequently demanded by Nazi Germany. In the pre-war sense Sweden's independence had vanished, because Sweden could no longer exist save with the tolerance of Hitler and within limits prescribed by Berlin.

When I returned to Stockholm from Norway's Namsos sector in the spring of 1940, the Nazis were waging a vigorous, diabolically shrewd war of nerves against the isolated Swedes. German planes were constantly violating Swedish territory, but the Swedes were so determined in a last-ditch defence of

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their neutrality that they shot down a number of these planes. Nevertheless the pressure upon Swedish nerves was unrelenting and frequently achieved Nazi purposes. Nazi agents circulated all sorts of wild rumours in Stockholm. An invasion scare kept the capital on tenterhooks over Whitsuntide weekend as the government, serving only a few hours' notice, imposed a complete blackout. A mysterious 25,000-ton German ship, reportedly a troop ship, disregarded Swedish warnings and entered the outer reaches of Göteborg harbour. When the ship withdrew, it persisted in standing by, just outside territorial waters. These and similar disturbing developments coincided neatly with demands from Berlin that passage of German troops and equipment be granted over Swedish railways into northern Norway. When the Nazis obtained the right to send Red Cross and medical units through Sweden, observers wondered how Swedish authorities could prevent German army officers from masquerading as doctors or what control could possibly be effective.

As one Nazi psychological offensive followed another in Sweden, we saw what happens to a country once it has become a prisoner of a policy of conciliation toward Hitler's Reich. As had happened so disastrously in Austria and Czechoslovakia, one concession to the Nazis always hatched the demand for more concessions—ample testimony to Hitler's genius for pulling the quills out of a porcupine one at a time, and preferably with the porcupine's consent. In those days it seemed that Sweden might be attacked at any time unless she conformed to Berlin's wishes on all major matters, so Stockholm authorities felt obliged to lean over backward to placate their menacing neighbour. Neutrality was now rarely compatible with what could be described as a truly independent Swedish policy, and evidence of this popped up in all sorts of ways.

Nils Grevillius, the famous Swedish opera conductor, finally came home after having been isolated in Bergen from the day Nazi troops inexplicably occupied that Norwegian key seaport. Until then not a single eyewitness report on what had happened in Bergen had leaked out, but Grevillius

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brought the first authentic story and related it to officials in the Stockholm Foreign Office. A Swedish friend tipped me off about this, but the Foreign Office had sealed the lips of the opera conductor and refused to release any information on the subject. (Evidently what Grevillius had seen was not suitable for publication from the Nazi point of view.) The next day a Swedish Red Cross man, back from Norway, told how he had been on a crowded Norwegian hospital ship when it had been attacked and machine-gunned by German airplanes. His story was not allowed to be published in the Stockholm newspapers, where it was no longer politic for Nazi war tactics to be reported frankly and fearlessly. These, of course, were merely minor indications of a much deeper change in Sweden's status. Hereafter her sails must be constantly trimmed to the Hitler hurricane, and that was the measure of the tragic loss both to Swedish security and to Sweden's moral authority.

The important question was whether Sweden, now a prisoner of her own neutrality, could hope to escape complete Nazi domination—whether this kind of artificial and brittle peace would be worth all that it cost the Swedes in food supplies, in hard cash, and in prestige. Time alone would bring a rounded answer to these questions, but at this period Sweden's moral authority had unquestionably fallen disastrously low among the Finns and Norwegians. Could the Swedes still hope to resist Nazi infiltration? How serious were the odds against them?

In May 1940 it was perfectly clear to experienced observers that Stockholm's 'all aid short of war' policy had presented Hitler with something far more effective—with the weapon of 'all intervention short of armed attack'. For when the Swedes failed to fight officially beside the Finns, the triumvirate of Hitler, Himmler, and Goebbels knew that contemporary Swedish leaders would not defend Sweden's recognized 'vital interests' in any other part of Scandinavia and that the Swedes would only fight on their own home soil, if at all. To high Nazi strategists this meant simply one thing: that Sweden would be open to coercion as never before, that

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Sweden could be counted on not to go to the defence of the other half of the Scandinavian peninsula, which is Norway, and that Nazi agents would be able to operate with increasing impunity throughout Sweden. In other words, the Hitler hierarchy could count upon an even greater measure of freedom for usurpation and internal conquest than had previously existed. With the Swedes isolated and bound to strict neutrality, Nazi infiltration must inevitably spread more swiftly, assisted by the germs of successful power, of exploitation of fear and exploitation of 'practical' minds. Those who governed Sweden had said it would be suicidal to send two army divisions to help Finland. To-day how many more Swedes would be inclined to declare it suicidal to oppose either the armed might or the ideology of Nazism! This was where 'all intervention short of armed attack' seemed certain to bend Sweden to Germany's purposes for so long as Hitler ruled continental Europe.

Actually the Nazis had more material for a Trojan horse in Sweden than they had found in Norway, and for a number of reasons. Many members of the Swedish aristocracy had intermarried with Germans and had been pro-German all their lives. A great many Swedish bankers and industrialists were traditionally close to the Germans. Several in the famous Wallenberg banking family had long maintained friendly relations with Field-Marshal Hermann Göring; in fact, one of them had visited London while I was there and certain well-informed Britishers said he came bringing a peace overture from Göring. In Stockholm the German legation had long maintained a fantastically swollen staff of more than one hundred, most of whom enjoyed favourable access to Swedish aristocratic, business, and banking circles. Thus at the top of Swedish society the cards were stacked against successful psychological resistance to Nazi propaganda and Nazi pressure.

Even before Germany invaded Norway Hitler's agents had made great progress inside Sweden. Anti-Nazi Swedes admitted apprehensively that some of their highly placed army and navy officers were Nazi sympathizers or downright pro-

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Nazi. A suppressed newspaper published factual reports about pro-Nazi meetings at the home of a Swedish admiral, whose wife was German by birth. Nazi 'salesmen' had long cultivated assiduously the great Swedish industrialists, whose bread could now be buttered only by trade with Germany. Finally, the Swedes were a friendly, easy-going, and frequently gullible people and Hitler's agents were masters of the art of flattery.

At a winter sports resort, while trying to recuperate from the strain of the Finnish winter in six short days, I had an opportunity to watch the sort of thing which was happening wherever Sweden's social and business élite gathered. The Prince von P— was the life of the party at our hotel. He was a most ingratiating world traveller and a great success with the Swedish women. I happened to know he had left Finland suddenly, by official request, on evidence indicating that he was acting as a Nazi spy. The prince spent a lot of time skiing and studying maps of ski trails which happened to run from Sweden into Norway and *vice versa*. The young daughter of a prominent Swedish general, an officer with exceptionally close relations to the royal family, was also staying at our hotel. From the day that her father appeared and his official connections became known, the prince fixed upon the daughter as his favourite skiing companion. They were married a few months later. I suppose the prince has picked up a great deal of useful information since then.

Of course the great majority of the Swedish masses were and remain strongly anti-Nazi. That was also true in Norway and equally true in Bulgaria and Rumania. But there was one fact which most Swedes, and Americans also, have refused to recognize although it has been proved again and again in any number of countries since Hitler came to power in 1933. This is the hard and deadly fact that all the Nazi system requires is a solid foothold *among a minority of the upper classes in any country*—a minority among government officials, among defence officers, and among the wealthy property-holders and business élite. Hitler already possessed the allegiance of a considerable minority of this kind in Sweden while I was

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there. I could not doubt that this minority has increased notably since then. On 15 March 1941 Bernard Valery sent a revealing report from Stockholm to the *New York Times*:

'Pro-German feelings combined with defeatism exist, however. They can be found in the same classes of society here as elsewhere; among professional army men, among upper- and certain middle-class industrialists, and finally in the aristocracy. *Unmitigated admiration* [italics mine] for the German military machine, concern for the pocketbook and family ties are partially responsible for these feelings. The greater part of them, however, is made up of revulsion and atavistic fear of Russia. *Despite all lessons* [italics mine] such people still believe that only Germany can save their estates, their properties, their country and the world from Russia and Communism. One should not underestimate the importance of these people. . . .'

As it stands, this paragraph constitutes a most forceful and irrefutable answer to all those in the United States or any other free land who insist that it 'can't happen here'. This is why Sweden's struggle to preserve parliamentary government and the essentials of independence cannot conceivably be won unless Nazism is defeated. All those who want Sweden to recover her complete freedom must remain united on this fundamental fact: recognition that her greatest danger comes from Hitler's Brown Bolshevism, not from Stalin's Red Bolshevism, and that it conquers most successfully through 'all intervention short of armed attack'. That is why the greatest danger to Sweden lies on the inside. Is there any sound logical reason to believe that Nazi Germany counts upon any lesser weapon to poison, pervert, and destroy American freedom?

The story of Sweden in the current war begins with the experiment of 'all aid short of war' and its early failure, then proceeds to the desperate and painful chapter of strict neutrality. Neither of these policies were bold, in the sense that the Scandinavian kings of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were bold. They harmonized, however, with a strongly pacifist nation and they had a rational basis in what seemed to Sweden's leaders the safest and most practical course to

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steer. Nevertheless it was a course which could not possibly give the Swedes safety in the long run or for so long as Nazism remained supreme. Germany's war machine was too all-powerful and ruthless. If Sweden wished to remain truly free and independent the fight of Britain and her allies was also Sweden's fight. Like Rumania and Bulgaria later on, the governors of Sweden failed to join the fight while there was still an opportunity. It was the human thing to do, yet its cumulative cost to the Swedish people was unavoidably great. This was true because when Sweden chose to stand alone, with Finland and Norway bowing to defeat on either side of her, she found herself inevitably upon the narrowest grounds of self-interest. With that her moral authority and her position of leadership as the largest and richest Scandinavian country were seriously diminished. This, of course, can happen quite as devastatingly to the United States of America as to Sweden and perhaps, given the enormous and unfaltering hope with which scores of millions of Europeans look to America, to a far greater degree.

Fundamentally Sweden's policy of 'strict neutrality' was based upon the fallacy that Sweden was not part of Europe and therefore could remain immune to the totalitarian holocaust. It was a contradiction of geography, belied by Nazi armed pressure even while it was being reared upon a pedestal. But what impressed me most forcibly, as a foreign observer present at the time, was the glaring contradiction between the Stockholm government's actions and the words of a great many Swedish citizens. Over a period of months it became a rather common occurrence to hear big, finely built Swedes, sometimes well fortified with schnapps, declare: 'Don't worry. The Germans will never attack us. They know what they'll get if they come up against the Swedes.' Up near Haparanda a soldier told me the same thing in regard to the Russians. In Stockholm and elsewhere we heard a great many self-confident assertions and quite a lot of unsolicited pronouncements on the quality of Swedish valour. Probably the average workman was not given nearly so much to braggadocio, but males of the more privileged classes often sounded



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more like Italian Fascists (before they got a real taste of war) than any people I have encountered anywhere else in Europe. An outsider got the impression that some of Sweden's citizens, quite a considerable number, had a weakness for talking very big and sounding extremely bold, all of which contrasted too strikingly with their government's cautious policies. In moments of war-scare crises and in other tight places we also saw a good deal of evidence of panicky nerves among the same category of people. Thus you gradually arrived at the reluctant conclusion that, however sound and patriotic the Swedish masses might be, the Nazis nevertheless had here an unusually fertile field for their war of nerves. It seemed that long generations of peace and the recent boom years of prosperity had ill-prepared Sweden's upper and middle classes to resist the menace which was now inside their gates.

The corrosive effects of the Hitler-made boom upon the Swedish people interested me particularly because it reminded me so vividly of the United States which I returned to in the summer of 1929, when our own bonanza decade was at its dizziest heights. This was not the America I had grown up in and known and loved. People everywhere were talking about how much money they had made in the market or parading their material possessions. Most Americans went in for show, flaunted their success if they had a shred of it, and talked rather condescendingly about benighted people who lived in other parts of the world. At least, we encountered so much of this sort of thing that our entire visit home was coloured and spoiled by it; all the more so because people who acted this way were really good-hearted, kindly people who did not realize for a moment what prosperity had done to them.

In Sweden American correspondents encountered a great deal of the same mentality and the same practices. It seemed that the upper- or middle-class Swedes had had more prosperity than they could digest and that materialism, unbroken and uncurbed by years of hardship or war-time suffering, had embedded itself deeply in the top layers of society. Perhaps these people had possessed and enjoyed too much for too

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long, thereby losing the habit of sacrifice and the determined, steely quality of the Spaniards and the Finns. You could understand how this had happened in the fortunate, smiling Sweden of the 'Middle Way', just as you comprehended all too well how it had once happened to the American people and might well happen again. But you had to admit it was there; and somehow these elements in Swedish society and character could not be entirely dissociated from a national policy which was now firmly restricted within the narrow limits of Sweden's self-interest. If her policy of strict neutrality could not be described as bold, neither could it profess to be generous in the sense of risking something or sacrificing something for a larger Scandinavian unity. Rather than go to war for this broader unity, as well as for her own moral leadership and prestige, Sweden had chosen temporary safety (or its appearance) together with isolationism. That, I suppose, is what most practical businessmen would do. And thinking it over, in May 1940, I was forced to remind myself that maybe this was exactly what America had been doing ever since the Second World War began. Maybe this was what I myself, back in London, had been insisting we ought to do. Now as I saw the plight of the Swedish people—their spiritual plight quite as much as their physical plight—the picture was far from pleasing. In this picture the things which were most painful to contemplate were those very features which might also be found in American policies and American actions. To-morrow, would my own people look to me as the isolated and self-interested Swedes looked to many of us here in Stockholm to-day?

And what had the Swedes gained? They had gained a respite from outright attack by Nazi Germany, chiefly because Hitler had much more urgent and important conquests to make elsewhere for the present. They had gained an armed truce which was nothing but a false mask of security. It was costing them the stupendous price of £150,000,000 a year in expenditures for national defence, or twenty-five pounds for every man, woman, and child in their country. They had gained something which could not remotely be described as

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peace, but fell short of actual warfare. All this could be championed as statesmanship and practical common sense. Yet the fact remained that Sweden's closest neighbours and nearest of kin knew that her synthetic peace and artificial freedom had been preserved (until such time as Hitler decided otherwise) at the expense of their own conquest, defeat, or enslavement. Both Norwegians and Finns knew that Sweden was no longer a leader but a follower nation among the peoples of the north, and that Sweden's loss was also their own. The day would soon come when the English-speaking peoples of Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand would look to the United States as Norwegians and Finns once looked to Sweden. Yes, in geographical position and in our spiritual inheritance (both on an enlarged scale but identical in their fundamental connotations) were not we Americans much more closely related to the unhappy Swedes than we had ever dreamed?

In their tragic and painful dilemma the Swedish people had lost things which they alone, in the silence of their own consciences, would one day weigh and evaluate. Many of them already realized how costly these things were, for they were the idealists and patriots who had also believed in international unity and co-operation, those common men and women who had made Sweden famous for her enlightened, progressive democracy. Now they were trapped by what had seemed safest and most practical, but the best of them, like my friends Kurt Andersson and Barbro Alving, were sick at heart over all that they knew had been lost. There were others who did not know or did not want to know, or who talked big and boastfully to drown out voices which would not be stilled. What else could Sweden have done? Nothing else, except to fight as the Finns and Norwegians had done. What else could Sweden have gained? Nothing less than an unchallenged title to the moral and spiritual leadership of the Scandinavian peoples. In isolation and in strict neutrality this jewel, rare for any nation, could not be found. Until it had been recovered twilight would persist over Scandinavia.

During that May of 1940 Nazi armies swept irresistibly

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down through Flanders and we in Stockholm began to wonder fearfully whether the French would be able to stop them; whether it could conceivably be possible for France to be knocked out. By the close of that month matters had reached a serious state, so much so that any American was justified in asking himself a good many questions about the high cost of neutrality. What manner of disasters now lay ahead for all peoples who were still free? Look how frighteningly small the world of free debate is now growing. If France falls how can Hitler and his Brown Bolshevism be defeated? How can it possibly be done without American aid on a simply colossal scale? What do you think now about American neutrality, Stowe? You have seen what 'all aid short of war' and strict neutrality have done for Sweden. You see how helpless and open to disintegration and destruction she now is. You know what the Nazi agents are doing here and what people will swallow their glib persuasions. What profiteth it for a man if he save his body and lose his soul? Are the principles and the fate of nations any different *au fond* from those of individuals? Never mind about other people. What about America and Americans?

It seemed now a long, long time since I had left England in November 1939, yet no more than six months had passed. Years of comfort and hope and progress had been wiped out, utterly destroyed in these few months. Back in November you still thought the United States ought to keep out of the war and leave it to those who had bought it. Rather like saying you won't fight a five-alarm fire because somebody else played with matches, wasn't it? Boil it down and what you said meant that we should make no military alliances with other free and democratic governments; that we should count upon isolation and upon standing alone. Now you've seen what has happened to Finland, Norway, and Sweden, all of whom believed in isolation and none of whom would unite with the others in a military alliance. Each counted on remaining free by itself; and if the Swedes are still technically free, you know how this pseudo-independence is being undermined, and you know what this solitary hand has cost Sweden already

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and that more is yet to come. Now the small minority of Swedish Nazis, headed by Sergeant Lindholm and Dr. Rueter Essen, will find powerful allies in many aristocrats, in the pro-Nazism of certain army and navy officers, and especially in the play-it-safe instincts of a good many Swedish industrialists and bankers. Yes, Sweden has paid an enormous price for peace. But when you pay an enormous price and then get a counterfeit, what then? Can America sit on the sidelines much longer without paying an equally enormous price? We say Nazism is barbarism, but if France falls who is going to stop Nazism? Who and when and where?

This was the question which no longer would be ignored. I was still debating it when my visa for Soviet Russia was granted. Soon I was on the Riga-Moscow plane. In Moscow I saw nothing and learned nothing to justify a hope that Stalinit Russia could stem the tide of Hitler's Brown Bolshevism, even if the Kremlin should ever be so heroic or rash as to make the attempt. Fear predominated in the atmosphere of Moscow, and the Kremlin, despite its massive walls, was a citadel of fear. Some days later I flew southward, in a rickety old plane, across the vast rich bread-basket of the Ukraine and finally above the smoking chimneys of the steel and aluminium factories at Dnieprostroy, and on to Odessa on the Black Sea.

At Nikolaiev I chatted for a while with a fairly well-dressed Russian who could converse haltingly in German. I asked him if he didn't think Nazi Germany, sooner or later, would turn on Soviet Russia to seize the Ukraine with its fabulous wheat lands and its big steel plants. The Russian looked at me quizzically, with very intelligent eyes.

'*Selbstverständlich*,' he said. 'Of course.'

## *Chapter 8*

### THE LOCUSTS COME—RUMANIA

**I**t seemed the sun had never shone with such warm, life-giving profusion. Its rays fell caressingly on the lake in the park where young couples rowed recklessly, laughing and jesting when their boats collided with one another. Its beams glanced off the marble façade of the royal palace with a glaring, almost blinding brightness and burned the necks and faces of the heavy-shoed soldiers as they marched stiffly back and forth, back and forth before the iron gates. The sun poured steadily down upon the broad new square, stroking the olive skins of men and women, young and middle-aged, with invisible but electrifying fingers. Pedestrians walked down the Calea Victoriei with heads up, in a carefree, light-hearted manner, and some of the young women in their Sunday best were chic and fine to look at and clad in dresses which were as light and airy as this day in June. The sun was everywhere, on the brilliant flower-beds near the Athenee-Palace Hotel, out on the Chaussée, where hundreds of promenaders strolled contentedly, on the narrow stone-paved streets of the Jewish quarter, on the massive Victory Arch, which also commemorated the foundation of Greater Rumania, on the luxurious villa where Magda Lupescu lived, on the gilded Byzantine domes of the churches, on the faces of all who stepped forth from the shaded sanctuaries of their homes. You had the feeling that this generous southern sun had warmed the hearts of almost every person you met on the streets. At last it was wonderful to be out of doors. The war in the west seemed very remote, like the fading blurred outline of an ugly dream; and the long, numbing Arctic winter now seemed equally far away and unreal.

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Here in Bucharest there were still laughter and music and *joie de vivre*, and while another Rome was burning in Flanders, people could still forget because this Rumanian sun glowed with new life and hope and forgetfulness and insouciance. Rumanians had always lived for to-day and had always danced in defiance of to-morrow's sorrow. That was why Bucharest was one of the last gay capitals in Europe; why its people read the black headlines about Sedan and Abbeville and Amiens but continued their minuet of make-believe, pretending they did not understand. After the seemingly endless northern winter this was a good place to be. The shop windows were filled with attractive wares. The restaurants overflowed with splendid food and fine fruits and wine. On a dollar basis prices were still extremely low in Rumania, and almost the only thing lacking in the stores was American pipe tobacco. Nowhere in war-time Europe had we discovered such a paradise of peace and plenty. Sunset and nightfall were nearing for all the Balkan peoples, but Bucharest was an unrepentant gypsy, dancing at her last gay ball.

She was a more modern and more presumptuous city than I had known in June 1930, when the playboy Carol flew home to seize the throne which had been occupied by both his father and his son. On all sides people told us about the gaudy bubbles Carol had blown in these ten years. There was much gossip, too, about the fortunes the King and certain of his favoured friends had reputedly tucked away, and about the diamonds which La Lupescu bought by the dozens. Oh, there were all kinds of scandal, fit for all sorts of after-dinner conversation, but what would hospitable, happy-go-lucky Rumania be without scandal? And who could sit brooding about such things while the sun shone profligately in the daytime and the beady-eyed gypsy violinists fiddled their mad, fierce, melancholy music far into the rose-lipped dawn? This, in truth, was the last waltz; but something much more like a cross between a polka and a *paso doble*, something which only a Latin-Slavic people like the Rumanians could whirl with appropriate folly and abandon. Of course Carol's bubbles would burst. Of course the sands in the hour-

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glass of Rumania's independence were running thin. Of course heartache and hunger and retribution lurked ominously in the deepening shadows. But these were a people born to frolic in the sun and to dance beneath the moon. They would be gay, friendly, pleasure-loving, irresponsible Rumanians to the end. *Vive la Roumanie!*

When Mussolini forced Fascist Italy into the war and when Paris fell and France capitulated, I was in Istanbul. The faces of Turkish officials were grave, indeed. On 17 June we had heard the voice of the B.B.C. declare: 'There can be no mistake about the position of the British Empire. Its resistance to the efforts of Germany to dominate the world will continue.' Now France was out of the war, but Turkish spokesmen in Ankara assured us that Turkey would stand by the letter of her alliance with the Allies. We saw the shock which these events had given the Turks and wondered whether they would ever fight, unless directly attacked—and if perhaps, when the time came, they would even do that. But there was little time in which to worry about Turkey. By 21 June, just at the moment when Germany's hands were fully occupied, the Soviet's Red divisions were taking over Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, clinching Moscow's outposts on the Baltic. In another week Stalin's ultimatum was delivered to the Bucharest government and only eleven out of twenty-seven in Carol's Crown Council voted in favour of fighting for Bessarabia. Nearly thirty Red divisions were swarming across the Dniester. Russian troops were occupying Chinsinau and rumbling over the fertile wheatfields and sheep lands of Bessarabia toward the Prut River. The Kremlin was taking its pound of Rumanian flesh. Not all the plunder in Europe would go to Hitler and his satraps. As I rushed back to Bucharest it was clear that south-eastern Europe was now ripe for the dictators' division of spoils. Amputation of Rumania was first on the agenda, but in Bessarabia it had merely begun.

On 1 July one of the last acts of Bucharest's 'surrender government' foreshadowed the impending upheaval throughout the Balkans. With the second armistice of Compiègne the



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last excuse for a continued Rumanian alliance with the Allied powers had disappeared. Bucharest officially renounced the hollow shell of Franco-British guarantees and announced a 'new orientation in foreign policy'. In reality, it proved to be an orientation without a policy, but it opened wide the door for co-operation with Nazi Germany. This step was taken despite the fact that the German Minister, Dr. Fabricius, had delivered a personal message from Adolf Hitler at the time of Moscow's ultimatum urging Rumania to accept the Soviet demands. The Rumanian peasants wanted to fight and so did the Rumanian army, but politicians had always had their way in this beautiful, rich, and looted land. Even the vast sums supposed to be devoted to national defence had been pocketed, to the tune of millions of pounds, by some of the highest persons in the country and by some who were closest to the royal palace. The Rumanian people had been betrayed by a long succession of corrupt but king-picked governors; but also by their own tolerance and weaknesses. Now the decision to surrender Bessarabia was taken before they had time to make any effective protest. The fatal precedent of capitulation had been set. Already they had been sold to Berlin.

On 4 July the government of Premier Ion Gigurtu was ushered in and swiftly inaugurated a government by and for totalitarians. It included four members of the strongly anti-Semitic and pro-Nazi Iron Guards, although they represented a fractional minority in the country. Even so the cabinet was not made in Berlin. It looked at the time and later proved to be the last deal of political cards that King Carol would be able to make from the royal palace. Nevertheless it constituted the King's reluctant move toward the Nazi bandwagon, which was the only uncomfortable direction left for him to turn. Nor was it an accident that the Gigurtu government immediately issued expulsion orders for thirty-six British oil-field engineers and proceeded swiftly to hogtie and gradually take over the Anglo-French companies, which controlled 66 per cent of Rumania's annual production of nearly 800,000,000 tons of oil. Only 300,000,000 tons of

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this war-sinew fluid was consumed inside Rumania each year. During the first six months of 1940 Germany had been able to obtain and transport only 388,000 tons. The Nazi war machine must get an enormous increase of oil supplies to fuel airplanes, submarines, and ships for its onslaught against the British Isles. This meant that the battle for Rumanian oil was on, and that, in turn, meant *tout simplement* the battle for control of Rumania. At last the 'New Order' had turned south-eastward, pulled by economic necessity. The *Drang nach Osten* had been resumed once more, and no one could tell where it would or could be stopped.

We spent this strange summer waiting for the inevitable crisis and its assured dénouement. We understood the meaning of the Nazis' *Bucharester Tageblatt* when it declared: 'The British island people must get out of Europe, finally and for ever.' We were sceptical about the additional remark that 'what they do otherwise does not interest us'. Well, maybe not for the present. We watched the Bucharest press 'purified' of all Jewish employees and saw them finally barred from work even with foreign newspapers or agencies. We heard Budapest clamouring for all of Transylvania, and Sofia more circumspectly demanding the return of the Dobruja. There would be another carving up of Rumania soon now. People feared it and knew this second and more devastating amputation must be faced, but the Rumanians still clung to hope. They claimed that more than two-thirds of the inhabitants of Transylvania were Rumanian by blood and by language. 'We will fight rather than give up Transylvania,' they said.

Meanwhile the days in Bucharest rolled pleasantly, gaily on through July and into August. Rumanians might be tormented by grave anxieties now and then, but the censored press never let them know the worst and, after all, this was a people which always drained the cup while the wine of joy lasted. The handsome restaurants by the lake were crowded every evening. At noon the sky was a soft, marvellous blue, spotted with diaphanous lace or perhaps with great piles of motionless fleece, and the sun blew down its furnace-like

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breath upon the multi-coloured umbrellas, and the caviare and the salads and the white wine soothed the most exacting palates. But at night the sky wore a softer, deeper cloak upon its shoulders, and its firmament was sprinkled with an infinity of tiny, unblinking eyes and the air came to life in cooling, gentle undulations. People rarely dined until ten or eleven at night and you could sit far into the morning, forgetting for the moment that there was a war and that the salesmen and advance agents of Nazism were already here and very busy. In the daytime, too, the outdoor swimming pools of Bucharest attracted throngs of sun-worshippers. The youths were bronzed pagans, highly conscious of the tiger-like litness of their bodies, and the sun-tanned young women revelled as much in their attentions as in sunshine and sand and the opportunity to display their own seductive graces. In all these places and in the humbler cafés and restaurants as well Rumanians turned their backs on care, fleeing the shadows of the war and playing to the end their fragile, time-limited game of make-believe.

The advance agents of the 'New Order' also dined well, and some of them took time out to go to the swimming pools or to drive up to the lovely mountain resort of Sinaia for week-ends. But most of them were very busy all day and frequently through the evenings. They could be numbered by the scores in Bucharest and they all seemed to have very specific jobs to do. Some of them, those who made it a point to be friendly with foreign newspapermen, used to tell us there would be no war in the Balkans because all Hitler wanted in the Balkan countries was peace and production. They seemed sublimely confident that everything would work out just as Der Führer wanted it, including the Nazi invasion of England, which they freely predicted would be completed some time in September, if not before. There were many Germans with mysterious missions who would drop into our hotel for a few days and then fade away in the direction of Vienna or Berlin, to reappear again for another round of visits in a week or two. And of course the enormously staffed German legation buzzed like a typical Teutonic beehive, regardless of the heat and re-

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gardless of the hours. Small wonder that rumours were the chief spawn of all conversations in Bucharest. Here you could hear anything, but prove almost nothing. In consequence speculation was even cheaper than caviare at fifty cents a portion.

The promoters and organizers of Hitler's 'New Order' were concentrating upon every aspect of Rumania's economic, political, and military potentialities. While they worked, Hungary's demands for revision of the Transylvanian frontiers became more and more pressing. So in mid-August we went on a tour of that overflowing provision basket which the 1919 treaties had incorporated in western and north-western Rumania. We found cities which were predominantly Hungarian, but in most districts the farming and rural lands were overwhelmingly Rumanian in population and warmly patriotic in sentiment. Within her borders Rumania also had a German minority numbering several hundred thousand. Mostly they were Saxons and Swabians by origin, their forefathers having settled in these inviting plains and valleys hundreds of years ago. Many of these German-speaking people lived in Transylvania, but wherever they dwelt the Nazi propagandists from Berlin had not neglected them. On the reshuffled map of the Balkan countries they were being promised a place and the role worthy of a 'master race'. Under the old Austro-Hungarian Empire the Hungarians, most emphatically, had been the master race in Transylvania and had denied the practice of either the Rumanian or the German language in their schools. So the Transylvanian Germans had been far happier under the much more tolerant Rumanian régime. They preferred to have Rumania keep control of Transylvania, unless Hitler could succeed in promoting them to a kind of super-citizenship reserved exclusively for those of German blood. Probably most of the older and middle-aged Germanic settlers would have been content to have things remain about as they were, but Nazi organizers (as in every land where a Germanic minority existed) had fanned the flames of German nationalism industriously, and especially among the youth.

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In the little border town of Carei Mare we met the local Nazi gauleiter. Apparently he was on the best of terms with the town's Rumanian officials, since they accompanied us when we went to visit the German school of Carei Mare. It was the strangest school I have ever inspected. At its gates we were greeted by a series of commands, shouted in harsh rasping German, and by a sharp clacking of leather heels. Fifteen husky youths stood at attention in the yard while their leader, attired in a black uniform and black boots almost identical to those worn by the Hitler Élite Guard (S.S.), harangued us in German. His theme-song has been heard from one end of Europe to the other: 'There can be no solution but a German solution.' The black-booted leader explained that this summer course was given to about twenty different young German-speaking descendants of the old Swabian settlers every week. They were trained for 'leadership' in their home communities. Their curriculum was one-hundred-per-cent National Socialist, something which made it quite evident that this 'leadership' course had nothing to do with service to the Rumanian state. Inside the first reception room two of the huskiest youths had been commanded to stand on either side of a classroom door. They were an amazing spectacle. Both stood with glowering faces and with fists tightly clenched, as if the epitome of Teutonic achievement was to look as tough and pugnacious as was humanly possible. The one on the left held his head excessively high with his chin thrust far forward, his eyes glowing with a fanatical light. His companion on the right leaned forward slightly. His head was bent down as if he were a bull about to charge at a red flag. They were like two gladiators waiting for the command to spring at someone's throat. During our twenty-minutes stay they did not change either their positions or their expressions. Evidently their poses were intended to impress us with the terrifying might of National Socialism. It would have been a silly performance save for the fact that those who enacted it obviously took the whole thing with great seriousness. In reality, theirs was the personification of that mad-dog creed which had determined to conquer all of

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Europe and to grind her people under its heel. In the adjoining classroom two regulation army rifles were mounted on the school desks for target-sighting practice. This was a *German* school in Transylvania. The Rumanian officials of Carei Mare made no effort to curb its activities.

Within two weeks Soviet divisions had become so restless along the new Rumanian-Russian frontier of the Prut River that Hitler was compelled to get the 'Rumanian problem' settled quickly before his slick fellow-dictator, Stalin, seized another piece of Rumanian pie for himself. So Hungarian and Rumanian leaders were summoned to Vienna and there the Nazi Caesar dictated another revision of the map of Europe, assigning about two thirds of Transylvania to Hungary and carving an ethnically fantastic finger deep into Rumania to the strategical crests of the Carpathians. It was a settlement shaped chiefly for military purposes and designed to check further Soviet expansion into Rumania. Transylvania seethed with anger and demonstrations in favour of war, while Rumanians everywhere declared: 'It is better to fight.' It was better to fight, but with such a government and after all the abuses which grafting politicians had heaped upon the hapless Rumanian people for many years, what could they do? What could they expect of their King? Everyone told stories about 'Carolica' and how he had taken excessively good care of his own pockets. Many Rumanian officers were brave and patriotic, but all Bucharest knew about high officers who had built villas and purchased handsome automobiles from the army's funds. Now the day of final reckoning had come. It was too late now. Rumania would be partitioned according to the whims and ambitions of Adolf Hitler, and after that—or concomitantly—he would be so gracious as to 'guarantee' the amputated corpse which remained (otherwise to be known as Rumania's new boundaries). Of course this guarantee provided for a so-called military mission and German technical experts to be stationed in Rumania. So the revision of Transylvania's status proved a most useful device indeed. It opened the door for two things: for the ousting of Carol II from the throne and royal palace in Bucharest, and for the

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German army's occupation of Rumania. After that Soviet Russia's expansionist ambitions in regard to south-eastern Europe would be spiked, once and for all. On the part of Hitler and the Nazis it was a shrewdly conceived, perfectly timed job. There was no one to protest, save the long-suffering and over-indulgent Rumanian people; but the futile breath of protest was all that remained for them. Now the night was falling fast. There was no escape.

Until a few minutes after nine o'clock the evening of 3 September 1940 was as serene and lushly warm as its predecessors had been for several weeks. Then a nondescript youngster, standing close to the wrought-iron fence in front of the royal palace, pulled a revolver out of his pocket and fired half a dozen shots wildly in the general direction of the second-floor windows of the palace. He raced madly down the Calea Victoriei, was finally captured by the police and held incommunicado. But within half an hour Bucharest was rife with a fantastic succession of unconfirmable rumours: several youths had attempted to rush the palace gates in an effort to assassinate the King; one of them had been shot and killed by the guards—stories like that. Shortly afterward the central telephone exchange, just a block below the palace, was plunged suddenly into darkness. Inside the building an Iron Guardist engineer, an employee, severed two international cables with an axe after disrupting local telephone communications by blowing out a series of fuses. Simultaneously a group of uniformed men raided Baneasa airport just beyond the city limits, and troops, hastily summoned, began sprinkling the surrounding landscape indiscriminately with bullets. Reports of an insurrection or of an attempted *coup d'état* spread feverishly throughout the Rumanian capital, while detachments of soldiers were rushed to all key centres of Bucharest. Meanwhile, in the Black Sea port of Constanza similar indefinable disorders had broken out and in Brasov, thriving business city of central Rumania, about sixty Iron Guardists stormed the telephone building. They smashed most of its switchboards, held the operators prisoner, and barricaded themselves for a siege. What followed was comic

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opera at its Graustarkian best. The Brasov 'rebels' remained in control of the telephone building for nearly forty-eight hours, occasionally talking with the local Rumanian military commander, refusing to surrender, and threatening bloodshed if they were attacked, but inquiring regularly if a new government had yet been set up in Bucharest. The 'rebels' were surrounded, so they couldn't leave the building, but nothing else happened in Brasov. These were the flash-in-the-pan incidents, seemingly disjointed and ineffectual but extraordinarily effective, which marked the beginning of a swift melodramatic finish to Carol II's plumed and gaudy ten-year reign. What was curious was the absence of violence or any forceful assault upon the government. What was noteworthy was the fact that everything started with a few harmless revolver-shots fired where they would echo in the ears of King Carol. Along with reports of these strange developments the next day's edition of the Bucharest newspaper *Universul* published a demand that General Ion Antonescu ('held without law or trial' in imprisonment ordered months before from the royal palace) be called to form a government. The newspaper declared significantly that Antonescu was needed 'to bring calm to a people embittered by ten years of tyrannical government which they have suffered and during which the youth of the nationalist generation has been basely killed and billions have been stolen from the country on the pretext of rearmament'. It appeared most unlikely that either the previous night's synthetic 'riots' or the contents of *Universul's* outspoken attack upon the King afforded any real surprise to the very intelligent occupants of the German legation in Bucharest.

Before midnight of 4 September, General Antonescu was not only out of prison but closeted with Carol II in the royal palace. He found a haggard-faced, highly distraught man who had helped to discredit and had finally suppressed parliamentary government in Rumania; who had manoeuvred himself into the position of the only absolute monarch remaining in contemporary Europe; who had thrived as his country's first politician as well as her King—a man whose



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reign had proved that he loved power and riches as much as he loved the gold trappings and resplendent uniforms of royalty. Rumanians often said of him: 'Don't worry about our Carolica. He will always look out for himself.' Obviously, this man was not the sort to admit easily any limitation of his powers when these powers had given him every pleasure he could wish, a luxurious life and vast wealth. But Carol II was trapped by politics and circumstance at last. Like Alfonso XIII of Spain he had discredited one political leader after another and had alienated all the largest parties in Rumania. There was no pliable politician to whom he could turn, but he had long known what Antonescu's conditions would be. Now he heard them uttered coldly and uncompromisingly. They would make the King a figurehead and General Antonescu a dictator in place of Carol. The King was in a bad state of nerves, but his Hohenzollern stubbornness was as strong as his chin was weak. Antonescu left, having warned Carol in parting that the nation was trembling on the brink of armed revolt and any consequent bloodshed would be his personal responsibility.

Some time after midnight the man who was called 'one of the few honest generals in the Rumanian army' was summoned to the palace again. He was implacably firm. He would never accept the premiership unless the King invested him with 'full powers' and nothing less than that. Carol pleaded and used every wile at his command, but Antonescu was adamant. Some time before four o'clock in the morning a shaken man, on the verge of collapse, reached for his pen. Carol signed the decrees which Antonescu had dictated and the only remaining absolute monarchy in Europe was dissolved in royal ink. Carol II, complete dictator of Rumania since he dismissed the country's parliament in February 1938, had ceded his place to a successor. The half-dozen revolver-shots fired two nights previously in front of the royal palace had fulfilled their well-planned mission. In all this there was neither glory nor comfort for a headstrong man who had been determined that he and he alone would rule. But retribution could not be stopped with this unwilling, last-

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minute concession. The only desire of Carol's many political enemies was to see the last of him, once and for all—and to see the last of his mistress, Magda Lupescu, as well. The young hot-heads in the Iron Guard were clamouring for victims and boiling with hatred. All Transylvania was flaming with rebellious demonstrations and ringing with cries for the punishment of all those in Bucharest who had surrendered to Hungary's demands. How could the Rumanian people be counted upon to accept the 'Vienna surrender' unless their attention was immediately distracted by something unthinkably melodramatic and exciting? After all, since Carol had always been pro-French and resolutely impervious to Berlin's courtship, the Nazis also had a score to settle with him, and now was the time.

Another midnight passed and it was now nearing daybreak on the morning of 6 September. Shortly before that five thousand Iron Guardists had rioted on the Calea Victoriei only two blocks from the palace. This time there was shooting and a gendarme was killed. The young Guardists had shouted again and again: 'The King must abdicate.' Sometimes they chanted: 'Don't let him leave the country with the money.' The distant roar of the mob could easily be heard inside the royal palace. Now it was long after midnight and General Antonescu, the new Premier-dictator, had been with Carol for several hours. He was sterner than ever now and he minced no words. Nothing short of outright abdication would do. None of the important political leaders would co-operate with the government unless Carol quit. Moreover, Antonescu declared, the King had lost the support of the army. Finally, the country was seething with unrest and at any hour revolution might break out. Things had reached a pass by this time where this statement was not exaggerated, even if it applied chiefly to the bloodthirsty minority of Iron Guardists. Carol resisted and protested and wriggled every way until after three in the morning. At last Antonescu played his trump card—what would happen to young Prince Michael if his father persisted on the path toward civil war? For all his faults, Carol II deeply loved his son. Well, did he

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want to rob Michael of all possibility of the succession? If he yielded now, Michael would be assured of the throne. In the end the King bowed to the inevitable. All his life he had been a playboy prince and a playboy monarch. Ever since he took the throne he had had his own way, just as Alfonso XIII had had his. So a big, nerve-shattered, broken man finally put his pen to paper once more and signed the formula of abdication. But not before he had exacted an agreement for an annuity of 20,000,000 lei, which would provide him with pocket money of from £15,000 to £25,000 a year for an indefinite period. The grateful Rumanian people were supposed to pay that. To the bitter end Carol II was an amazingly astute businessman. Before noon hundreds of jubilant Guardists, assembled in the palace square, cheered frenziedly for King Michael—but what they were really cheering was the imminent departure of his father.

Another September dawn came to Bucharest and a big limousine containing three persons sped to the main railroad station. The quays were deserted when a long train pulled out, headed for Timisoara and Belgrade. On the train were Carol, Magda Lupescu, and Ernest Urdareanu, the ex-King's boon companion, who had risen from a nonentity among lower army officers to the privileged inside post of marshal of the royal court. The Iron Guardists had been clamouring for the heads and fortunes of Magda and Urdareanu, but somehow Carol had taken good care of his most intimate political and financial advisers. Later Bucharest gossip, some of it seemingly very authentic, insistently claimed that the many cars on the departing ex-King's train were not hooked on by chance. It was asserted that even in flight Carol had cleaned house with an appraising eye. Rumour persisted that the cars were jammed full of valuables of all kinds and contained millions of pounds' worth of more or less personal belongings. Late that afternoon Carol's train passed through Timisoara before waiting Iron Guardists identified it. Then they commandeered an engine and chugged off in hot pursuit. They poured rounds of desperate shots into the rear of the royal train, but perhaps Carol had thoughtfully promised his

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driver a handsome tip. At any rate Carol II, who had flown into Rumania ten years before to seize the fattest kingship in Europe, appropriately left his country as the inspiration of a typically Wild Western pursuit party. If it had been a gangster's escape it couldn't have been better staged.

When it was all over, most Rumanians heaved sighs of relief and began to talk boldly about an incredible parade of scandals which had been only whispered before. They talked about the millions and millions of pounds which the King's friends Nicholas Malaxa and Max Auschnit had accumulated in the course of a few years. They told stories of 'rake-offs' which would make Al Capone green with envy. Some of them who had been close to palace circles estimated that Carol had contrived to build up outside Rumania a personal nest-egg amounting to somewhere between £4,000,000 and £10,000,000 during his bonanza decade as King. In any case, you encountered universal recognition of Carol's financial genius and acquisitive talents; and it was unanimously agreed in Bucharest that if ever a king made royalty pay big dividends 'Carolica' was the man. People might differ about how responsibilities should be distributed among members of the 'palace clique', but there was none to deny that corruption and public looting had hit almost unprecedented heights during Carol's reign—almost or perhaps quite unprecedented, even for Rumania. Some day perhaps the full story would be told, paying adequate attention to Nick, Maxie, and Ernie and other cronies of the royal palace. It would make fascinating reading and prove far more intriguing than any tawdry tale of American racketeers, although some of the slickest details (according to those in the know in Bucharest) would probably be enlightening and instructive to certain so-called big shots in New York or Chicago. Well, it was all over now. Rumanians might be wiser, as they certainly were poorer; but at least for the moment they had something else to think about than the unhappy fact that Rumania had lost many things of infinitely greater value than a Hollywood king.

It was all over and Rumania was nothing but the amputated remnant of a once large and potentially prosperous

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country. Within the past two months she had suffered major amputations, totalling 41,359 square miles, which reduced her territory by more than one-third. In these ceded areas she had lost 6,212,000 of her national roll-call, or nearly one-third of the population of what had been Greater Rumania. If Carol and the country's leaders had been capable of statesmanship they would have negotiated a return of debatable areas and minorities to Hungary and Bulgaria, rather than leave the door open for direct intervention by Adolf Hitler with the imposition of much harsher terms. But Rumanians had merely been as heedlessly blind as all other nations which profited greatly by the 1919 treaties. In the end they had been bled from the inside as preparation for another kind of bleeding, administered from without.

Perhaps this easy-going, over-human people had invited all that had happened to them; yet their charm was as warming as the sun which shone beneficently down upon their smiling, rolling countryside. Their gaiety was contagious and, for all their failings, they knew much of the secret of contentment and laughter. Having lived with them for a while you understood what a young woman who had been born in Transylvania meant when she said: 'My heart is a cocktail. My mother was Hungarian and my father Rumanian, and I have lived for six years in Budapest. But these Rumanians—they are a kind, a friendly people, like no others in Europe.' In any case you knew they were an exceptionally kind and friendly people, while being the first victims of their own licences and tolerance. Latin blood was also in their veins, and being strongly Latin they were realists about themselves. Being realists, and in sharp contrast to most Scandinavians, they were not sensitive about their weaknesses or transgressions. The sin of pretensions, so common to Anglo-Saxons as well as other Nordic races, was not theirs. The Rumanians lived in the sun, and those who live in the sun, by what law of nature I do not pretend to know, seldom deny the shadows which they cast. Marthe Huysmans had expressed it most aptly one freezing day in Lapland. 'I prefer the vices of the sun to the virtues of the snow,' she said.

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In mid-September I left Bucharest for a round of the Balkan capitals, and when I returned a month later the locusts had come. Now a huge red swastika flag hung above the front door of the Athenée-Palace Hotel, just as I had seen another such flag draped from the Grand Hotel in Oslo. The lobby and salon were crowded with German army and aviation officers. They wore their uniforms handsomely. They were straight, hard-faced, quiet, and efficient. The broken-down lounging-chairs in the Athenée bar had been replaced for their benefit with finely upholstered modernistic furniture; but I never saw a single Nazi officer take a drink in that bar. These Germans were not like Englishmen and Frenchmen (and Americans), who always took their wars with whiskies or brandies. These Germans, whether in uniform or in supposedly civilian activities, were all too busy for any kind of alcoholic festivities. You don't conquer Europe with hangovers. For them this war was a brutally severe business. They had not come to Rumania to celebrate, but to do a highly important job. As yet our hotel housed only about fifty German officers, but the Nazi military took over the entire Hotel Ambassador two days after I returned. Some diplomats, including one or two Americans, were still describing the Nazi influx as simply a 'military mission'. That was what Berlin called it officially, of course, but several trainloads of officers, men, and equipment had already entered Rumania. The principal Rumanian airports had already been taken over by Germans. Their 'technicians' were already active in Galatz on the lower Danube and soon German submarine experts were reported to be at Constanza on the Black Sea. If this was a Nazi 'mission' it would give Joseph Stalin more sleepless nights than any mission he had ever seen or heard tell of through twenty years of Bolshevism.

The locusts were descending upon Rumania, and how much there was for them to eat! Across the palace square at the Cine restaurant two of us could dine on caviare, four large crayfish apiece, three mutton chops apiece, vegetables, fruit salad, wine, and coffee—all for approximately ten shillings. In the Two Roses, one of the plainest but best eating places

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in Bucharest, you could have wonderful thick, tender steaks and everything else you could possibly eat for half that price. And quite unlike the dour and grasping, tourist-spoiled waiters in Budapest, the Rumanian waiters accepted their tips with smiles and a 'Thank you'. Yes, there was still plenty of food in Bucharest—but not for long. Already German soldiers were in the stores, buying supplies greedily. They were authorized, or perhaps commanded, to send ten-pound packages home to Germany every week. They were buying textiles, woollen goods, clothing of all kinds. Within a week they descended upon the city markets in their own trucks and one morning a near-riot broke out when infuriated Rumanian women discovered that the Germans had bought out all the fish in the market in a single clean-up visit. Meats, poultry, and game had always been heaped up in profusion at all the middle-class restaurants and taverns in Bucharest, but in a short time now such things would be a fond memory. After all, at least a hundred thousand Germans were already scheduled to be stationed inside Rumania, and who could guess how many more would follow them?

Only the naïve, however, could regard the locusts in uniform as of foremost importance. The king locusts did not wear uniforms. They attracted much less attention that way, and they ate much bigger game than quail or rabbit. After all, they had been here for months and eating steadily, munching and munching at the most costly products which fell from the cornucopia of Rumania's riches. They had obtained direct or indirect control of the fabulous Rumanian oil fields. They had contracted for vast quantities of wheat, rye, and barley. They had wormed their way into the great Rumanian steel corporation, into textile and cement industries and into a wide variety of business enterprises. The anti-Semitic decrees of the successive Gigurtu and Antonescu governments served Nazi purposes perfectly. The Jews in Rumania had long held a dominant place in business and banking, and as the Iron Guardists ejected the Jews, they simply turned up new soil for German exploitation. Innumerable devices, usually borrowed frankly from time-proven Nazi ingenuity, were used to

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discriminate against both Jews and foreign capitalists. One of the most deadly of these was the so-called Rumanization law, which provided for government commissars (Brown Bolshevism, copyright in Moscow) to supervise companies which were not one hundred per cent Rumanian. It permitted the Ministry of National Economy to appoint 'at any time it may consider necessary, *without stating any grounds for such action* [*italics mine*], a Commissar for Rumanization to be attached to any enterprise'. After that the commissar could make his own rules, as was learned to their sorrow by the directors of American firms like the Romana-Americana oil company, Singer, Ford, and the American-financed telephone firm. But the first goal of 'Rumanization' was to drive Jewish enterprises out of business or to force their owners to sell out at any price they could get; and that was where the king locusts came in.

During the last two weeks of October approximately eighty German businessmen were active in Bucharest alone. They concentrated chiefly on buying up sound and profitable Jewish-owned firms, and the Iron Guard violence against the Jews had already become so systematic and terrorizing that these unfortunate people did not dare to ask for more than a fraction of what their enterprises were worth. At this time Germans took over the large Samilevici oil exporting company; the Herdan bakeries (the largest in Bucharest); the Impretext textile firm, important metallurgical businesses, and many other concerns. Simultaneously the anti-Semitic Iron Guardists, or that portion of the Legionnaire movement whose members were fanatics and thirsting for pogroms, launched a city-wide offensive of seizure and robbery. A typical incident occurred when a dozen Guardists entered a prosperous Jewish textile shop. Their leader simply declared: 'We want your shop and we'll pay you 200,000 lei. Take it and get out—or we'll close the shop.' They threw down exactly 200,000 lei in cash and took over goods in stock alone which were worth more than 5,000,000 lei. Everywhere Jewish homes were broken into and plundered on the pretext of search to see whether anti-hoarding decrees were being vio-



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lated. In one wealthy Jew's house they found 2,500,000 lei, pocketed it, and forced him to sign a paper stating that the money had been found on a gambling-table. Thus, while the Antonescu dictatorship was preaching a national house-cleaning of corrupt politicians, Jewish Rumanians were being subjected to unmasked plunder, and Hitler's economic specialists moved efficiently to gain control of the richest resources and most profitable enterprises in the country. Yet not all Germans who took over Jewish businesses did so with the self-confident air of the professional Nazis. There were two, for instance, who even closed their deal without making an effort to beat down the obviously low figure which the Jewish owners asked; and when the matter was closed one of the Germans said, with a sudden burst of bitter frankness: 'Yes, we have lost the war. But that's not the worst. What is far worse than that is this. When this war is over we Germans will take the place of you Jews. We shall be the most hated and persecuted race in Europe. In whatever country Germans are found they will be hounded, starved, or killed. That is far worse than simply losing the war.'

Meanwhile Herr Himmler's Gestapo, long represented in Bucharest in most adequate fashion, was now installing itself there openly. Most of the city's hotels had now been requisitioned for the Germans, but some second- and third-class ones remained at the public's disposal. The Gestapo, however, merited greater consideration than that. So an entire section of Rumanian policemen were moved out of a divisional headquarters building and the Gestapo moved in. After that, with Nazi secret agents behind the scenes in every important government ministry or bureau, there could be no doubt about who was running Rumania. Probably there were still only a few hundred German soldiers in Bucharest itself. It was better policy to keep them out around the country anyway. But enough field-grey uniforms were already here so that you observed how the Rumanian people reacted, and especially Rumanian officers and soldiers. They rarely saluted the German 'guests' if they could possibly avoid doing so. As a rule the German officers were painstakingly correct, but

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among themselves they could not always refrain from expressing their disdain of everything Rumanian.

In the Continental restaurant one evening two German officers, carelessly assuming that their language would not be understood, passed several remarks about the 'dumb Rumanians' and how one could never hope to make decent soldiers out of them. A Rumanian colonel rose from a near-by table, walked over, and demanded that the remarks be withdrawn. Refusing to rise to their feet, the Germans ignored his request. Whereupon, with measured calculation, the Rumanian colonel delivered a slashing open-palm blow across the first Nazi officer's face. Then he tossed his card upon the tablecloth, hoping and expecting to be challenged to a duel. Nothing like that happened. The next day the Rumanian colonel was court-martialled by his own superior officers for insulting a German officer. There was no longer room for either patriotism or honour in the Rumanian army.

After all, Rumania had already been conquered—from within—months before the uniformed locusts arrived. Wherever leaves were green, and this was a land of richest greenery, the king locusts had munched diligently for many months. They had the keenest teeth in the Nazi hierarchy and they knew exactly where to go and what they were after. Now a great many of the heavy-set, crop-haired, and roll-necked German bourgeoisie were also flowing into Rumania. They were not nearly so clever and much more obvious, like the clumsy fellow who objected to the singing of the French song *Toujours* one night at Zissu's and thereby succeeded in kindling the animosity of all the Rumanian clients in the place. But these middle-class, blundering Germans were late-comers and a distinct minority. The real Nazis were never like that. Instead they were as smooth as vegetable oil, polished, alert, and as ingratiating as a Georgian prince on the trail of an American millionairess. They were the salesmen and advance agents; and the jobs of most of them were pretty well finished in Rumania. They would be moving on soon. The German army and the Gestapo would have everything in their hands very shortly. What was that Rumanian saying that someone

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quoted in acid tones the other night? Oh yes: 'If you take Scotch people into your home they will soon throw you out.'

Still more bitter and disastrous days lay ahead for the Rumanian people; the ravages of the November earthquake, the ghastly Iron Guard slaughter of several thousand Jewish citizens during the brief civil war in January, and the long night of Nazi armed occupation, month after month—perhaps year after year. Now, in late October, the restaurants by the lake were all closed and the sun had lost its sharp searching intimacy. But Bucharest had lost much more than that. The last gay madcap ball of Greater Rumania had ended. Out near the North Station the gypsy orchestras still played, and perhaps they swept their bows up and down with greater fierceness than ever before; but in the Colorado and other cabarets gaiety was more brittle. Something was missing, missing there and along the *Chaussée* and down the *Calea Victoriei* and on the boulevards. The chestnut trees stood stripped and bare on the *Chaussée*. The green leaves of Rumania's summer had disappeared. You might have thought the leaves had fallen, were it not for the fact that the locusts were still here and that some things in Rumania were not yet entirely bare.

'A few more months and you will all be hungry,' I said.

Teodora was not more than twenty-five, olive-skinned and dark-eyed and used to laughter and the good things of life. Would the locusts eat her too, and all her friends? What could they do? Something as strong and fierce as the mid-summer southern sun burned suddenly in Teodora's eyes.

'We shall still have the good air and the good Rumanian earth,' she said. 'They can't take *them* to Germany—and they never can take our hearts.'

## Chapter 9

### THE 'NEW ORDER' IN THE BALKANS

**I**n Sofia a Bulgarian housewife said to me: 'We have no butter and no vegetable oil nowadays. We're lucky to get even seven ounces of sugar a week—and this in a rich farming country like Bulgaria. The Germans take everything. Well, we've got back the Dobruja. Now we have to pay for it!'

In Belgrade's Café Sarevatz the bald-headed second violinist got really steamed up one night, so he jumped up and sang that old Serbian patriotic song: 'The wind is blowing from this side of the Carpathians, and we and the Russians are two hundred million strong.' Of course he took the house down with that, but certain people in the German legation didn't like the implications behind this Pan-Slav refrain. 'We and the Russians—' As a result of a Nazi diplomatic complaint the Sarevatz singer was arrested and fined two weeks' wages.

In Budapest a Hungarian count was much pleased with a bet he had made just before coming to dinner. He had met someone who was willing to wager a thousand pengos (about forty-five pounds) that Germany would win the war. 'I didn't think I could find such an idiot,' chortled the count gleefully. It sounded rather strange coming from someone who was living directly beneath Adolf Hitler's instep. But I had to remind myself that Hungarian aristocrats, by and large, have proved themselves just about the shrewdest gamblers in all Europe. How would they still retain their enormous feudalistic estates if they and their forebears had not been experts at picking the winners?

At any rate these were typical of the strange variety of

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incidents which you encountered while travelling through the Balkan countries in the early autumn of 1940. Everything revolved around the war, and all Danubian peoples realized their fate was staked upon its outcome. The common people realized it now because they were becoming more completely prisoners of Berlin with every week that passed. From the viewpoint of the Nazis that was both natural and necessary. Years ago Hitler and his strategists had clearly foreseen and planned what was now virtually consummated along the Danube. The grain, live stock, oil, copper, bauxite, and other raw materials of the Balkan lands were absolutely essential if Germany was to win the war against the western powers. The Balkans must stoke the Nazi war furnaces and feed Berlin's war machines. If victory could not be assured otherwise, then the economic productivity of these nations must be bled white. To be able to do that Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria must be controlled politically as well as economically. To avoid the severe strain and dislocation of invasion these countries must be sucked into the Nazi orbit, be drawn into increasing dependence upon German markets for their own livelihood and won over to Nazi methods of 'co-operation'. But especially, and to make certain that they could neither escape nor rebel, the Balkans must be conquered from within. That required a technique and a slogan. The Nazis had perfected the technique long ago. After the fall of France their slogan became 'the New Order in Europe'. It was the imperative task of the Danubian nations to 'co-operate' in the Axis-dominated 'New Order'. Ever since the capitulation of the Bordeaux government in June we American correspondents living and working in south-eastern Europe had been watching the 'New Order' dig in. It was a most educational and illuminating experience.

Wherever we went, whether to Bucharest, Sofia, Budapest, or Belgrade, we lived virtually surrounded by the apostles, manipulators, and architects of Hitler's 'New Order'. From sixty to eighty per cent of the occupants of the first-class hotels in these capitals were always Germans. Sometimes, as in Sofia in September and in Bucharest a month later, it was difficult

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to reserve a room because the locusts from Berlin arrived in such swarms. There were all kinds of businessmen and 'business' men. There were salesmen and 'salesmen'. There were also husky young men whom we came to recognize as 'German tourists'. Even in September, many months before the German army arrived, so many thousands of these German 'tourists' were scattered about Bulgaria that the Bulgarian Communists were agitating against tolerance of 'this fifth-column menace'. Everyone knew, of course, that these hard-muscled youths of military age and training were not rusticating in Balkan towns and resorts merely for their health. But how was any government going to bar them entry into its country without offending Berlin? If Nazism conquers Britain will Washington be able to refuse visas to young Germans who present presumably authentic tourist credentials? The Nazis had invented a most embarrassing but effective kind of tourist problem. Nevertheless, these 'tourists' were not nearly so important as Nazi advance agents of many other categories. We used to see them work and hear them talk.

After the French capitulation Hitler's civilian emissaries had an exceedingly important propaganda job to do throughout the Balkans. They were flushed with new confidence, and that was understandable, but it was high military strategy that they should communicate a feeling of inevitable Nazi triumph wherever they went. Some of them cultivated Balkan cabinet members and politicians. Some concentrated chiefly upon high army officers and national defence experts. Some circulated exclusively among industrialists and bankers. Some maintained contacts with the Balkan press and so took pains to chat affably with foreign correspondents as well. The Compiègne armistice had scarcely been signed when they were telling us: 'It is too late for the English now. Our armies will be in England by September. Don't worry about that. Everything Der Führer has said he'll do he has done. Our task is to set up the "New Order" in Europe. These Balkan peoples have plenty of food and minerals and Germany needs these things. From now on they've got to work with us. We

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Germans can produce manufactured goods for all of Europe and Africa. After all, what do you Americans have to worry about? We have all that we can take care of over here. Besides, it's too late to do anything about the English anyway.' In those days Nazi salesmen were emphatic in saying that Hitler would tolerate no warfare in the Balkan countries. All he wanted from these peoples was for them to go to work and produce. Whatever Hitler wanted, it was clear that it covered an enormous lot of ground. Otherwise the Balkan hotels would not have been overflowing with such hordes of German visitors. Gradually we caught revelatory glimpses of the digging-in processes of the 'New Order'.

One noon in July we were lunching in the garden of the Athenaeum-Palace in Bucharest. Several tables were occupied by Germans, including one just across from us. My attention was attracted by a sallow-faced man in his early forties. He had a heavy mop of long black hair, peculiar eyes, and wore an extremely well-tailored suit. His companions were treating him with that over-accentuated deference which Germans always assume toward persons who are a few rungs above them in social, political, or military importance. Where had I seen this man's face before? I knew I had seen him. It is my job to remember faces and the habit is long-established. Nevertheless I couldn't find the name or the circumstances which belonged with this face. Finally someone said: 'Dr. Guido Schmidt.' It happened I had never met him personally, but had remembered his pictures. There had been reason enough to remember him, even from newspaper pictures. After all, he had been the last Foreign Minister of Austria; the man who had the reputation of being Chancellor Schuschnigg's bosom friend. It was he who had encouraged Schuschnigg to walk into Hitler's trap at Berchtesgaden, so that Austria could be destroyed from within. So this was Guido Schmidt, looking very prosperous and wearing the air of an important personage. What could Guido Schmidt be doing in Bucharest? Whatever he was up to, it was certain to be something of particular value to the Nazi hierarchy in Berlin, for he was one of the traitors who had been richly rewarded.

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The Nazis may talk a great deal, but they had demonstrated most conclusively (as while carefully preparing their elaborate plot in Norway) that they can be remarkably discreet and close-mouthed whenever that is the wise policy. This was true of Hitler's advance agents in the Balkans to a marked degree. Accordingly the chances were that my curiosity about Guido Schmidt and his mission in Rumania would never be satisfied. I saw him at various places about the capital and I kept my eyes and ears open, but without success. Some ten days later I was going through the Bucharest newspapers one morning and stumbled upon a headline: 'Resita—New Board of Directors'. Anything about Resita was interesting, because Resita was the fifty-million-dollar steel corporation of Rumania—what might be called the United States Steel of the entire Balkans. Reading on I came upon the name of A. Goring—the brother of Field-Marshal Göring—and then the name of Dr. Guido Schmidt. So that was it. The Nazis had got on the inside of Resita's mighty empire of steel. There could be no doubt about what that meant, because Göring and Schmidt were two of Hitler's most efficient and trusted industrial organizers. They were key executives in the great Hermann Göring iron works in Austria. That alone was sufficient to put Dr. Schmidt on easy street after the betrayal of Austria. They were also directors of the powerful Skoda armament works, which had been handed over to Hitler at the Munich Conference along with Czechoslovakia.

Now they would channel the production of Resita's factories into the feed-stream of Germany's war production. How had they worked their way into directorships on Resita's board? Had not King Carol put his close pal and marshal of the royal court, Ernest Urdareanu, in a top place with Resita? Well, the French and the British had no more influence in Rumania. It was extremely easy for Berlin to put the pressure on, wasn't it? The Gîrgurtu puppet government had pledged itself to 'co-operation' with Germany, and Hitler's boys were always the ones who decided just what 'co-operation' meant and required. Maybe the Nazis had had to do a little bribing



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here or there, but nothing could be simpler than that in Rumania. Or perhaps the heads of Resita had been reminded that there was only one way for them to assure themselves of a comfortable income in a New Ordered Europe. Anyhow Hitler now had inside control of Resita, to whatever degree events might dictate to be necessary, but only a handful of Rumanians even knew it had happened. A government-controlled press buries such items on the inside pages. One aspect of this development was exceptionally noteworthy. The Nazis got Resita in their pockets a full three months before a single German soldier ever entered Rumania. The stupidest man on the street could recognize a German uniform. Only a few of the most intelligent knew who the Nazi advance agents and king locusts were. They attracted little attention. They were just German businessmen and they took pains to be very friendly with the selected category of Rumanians, Bulgarians, or other Balkan citizens whom they met.

In the hotels where I stayed, the Nazi advance agents were as busy as bees all summer and autumn. Their industry impressed me most of all, and after that the suaveness and surety with which they operated. Sixteen-hour days were nothing to them. Wherever I went, whether to Sofia or Belgrade or elsewhere, the Germans almost invariably had breakfast downstairs in my hotel and most of them finished before eight in the morning. They were out all day in the Balkan capitals, keeping appointments, making contacts, or closing deals. They might return for an *apéritif* before dinner, but several nights a week they were wining and dining Balkan guests in the best restaurants. They were excellent hosts, always affable and attentive—and always doing things with the air of persons who are accustomed to dispensing favours, provided you recognize their rather special position in the scheme of things. Whom were they wining and dining? Ministers, generals, bankers, editors, industrialists—representatives of those selected professions and occupations whose leaders could be decisive in establishing unqualified 'co-operation' with Nazi Germany. This was what the German advance agents worked for day and night, and they worked very long hours—twelve,

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fourteen, or fifteen hours a day—with Teutonic persistence, planning, and efficiency. Watching them I used to wonder whether the average American male, with his eight- or nine-hour day five days a week and his week-end relaxations, really knows much about hard work after all.

When everlasting hard work is hitched to a detailed, scientific chart and synchronized with an extremely intelligent propaganda procedure the resultant combination is formidable indeed. This is what the Nazis have done. It accounts in large measure for their brilliant military achievements, but I believe they have made it even more effective in the political and economic fields. From the outset Hitler put all Germans on a war-time basis. From 1933 every banker or salesman or journalist who went abroad had to conduct himself, first and foremost, as a Nazi propagandist and as a cog in the gigantic wheel of Nazi totalitarian purposes. If he refused to function toward these ends, he was quickly eliminated. So for seven years before physical and official war broke out, German business representatives were trained as agents and grooved to function on a war-time basis—carrying out orders unquestioningly, painting utterly false pictures wherever false pictures served the ends of the Nazi state, spreading ideas or illusions which Dr. Goebbels had decided would help to shatter resistance in this country or that. These and scores of others were the vital aspects of the war of the spirit and the war of nerves. Hitler, Goebbels and Company understood perfectly that the war of nerves was directed primarily against capitalists and capitalistic nerves—against men with stock-market minds and property-dominated consciousnesses. Therefore the Nazis counted upon their psychological offensives to capture what at first they could not seize by force of arms (as was true of Czechoslovakia) or to obtain what they hoped they would not be forced to fight for militarily (as was true of Austria, and later of Rumania and Bulgaria). Thus the civilian soldiers of Nazism had been trained for years to function with military precision in business and other economic fields and to use the weapon of propaganda to its maximum advantage. This was why they had old-

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fashioned American capitalists on the defensive all over Latin America until the war limited the amount of attention they could devote to our Latin neighbours.

Through the summer of 1940 we watched the modern world's most efficient salesmen at work in the Balkan countries, and of course they were Hitler's advance agents. They had to get Rumanian oil, Bulgarian tobacco, Yugoslav copper and pork, and Hungarian bauxite, plus many other things which Germany needed badly. But that was only one part of a much broader and deeper task. It was their job to line up key personages and take them into the Nazi camp. Nazism knows no code but the code of success. Any kind of pressure or blackmail was justified. If fear would work, they used it. If bribes brought results, bribes were the order of the day. Often the German 'salesmen' openly announced themselves as the 'new masters of Europe'—that was usually a telling psychological stroke. 'There is no room in south-eastern Europe, or anywhere in Europe, for an economy which is not linked to the Third Reich,' they would say. 'If you want to do any business—or if you want to have any future in your own country's government—you've got to co-operate with us. The wise and the shrewd Balkan leaders are those who show they are capable of working with us. Now what we want from you—' There was no false modesty about what the Germans asked for, and usually they got it.

What Hitler's agents were after was not merely an economic monopoly but domination—political and ideological domination which would bind the 'subject races' so they could not escape. This was why they dined and wined such a selected assortment of upper-class representatives in Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade, and Budapest week after week. Perhaps a Berlin financial expert was cultivating a minor executive in the Bank of Yugoslavia. The Yugoslavs were pretty tough and only a few of the top-notch people had been won over; so the Nazis had to dig lower down. What would the Nazi host be saying to this department head from the Bank of Yugoslavia? Something like this: 'Listen, you're an intelligent man. You know perfectly well that our Third Reich

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controls this continent. *We* are the masters of the new Europe. The only Yugoslavs who are going to do any real business or make any real profits from now on are the men who are wise enough to co-operate with the New Order. You ought to be one of these men. After all, we can't trust the president of your bank. He's been pro-French all his life, and most of the vice-presidents are just as bad. They ought to be thrown out, and when you get the right kind of government they will be. Now, we've been watching you, and you've got much more ability than they've ever given you credit for here. But we need certain information about some of your bank's top executives. You know what I mean. . . . Maybe some of them have Jewish grandparents, too. Well, you're an intelligent man. If you're clever, *you* can be the president of the Bank of Yugoslavia.' The chances are that this particular department head has felt himself neglected or discriminated against for a long time. Nine times out of ten a man in his position is likely to reply: 'Well, I *am* an intelligent man--and I've always thought I ought to be president of our bank. . . .' After that Mr. Hitler's emissary orders another bottle of champagne. It is much cheaper than having to fight battles; and though the Nazis were forced to fight for Yugoslavia at the last, unexpected moment, it is still true that Hitlerism, up to June 1941, had conquered seven out of fourteen countries without having to attack with a single regiment. Seven countries out of fourteen adds up to a colossal amount of territory and wealth acquired at a fantastically low price.

In the Balkan countries, as in most other lands, Nazi salesmen and propagandists wasted little time on the masses. All their energies were concentrated upon the vulnerable upper classes. This is a feature of Nazi strategy which is all-important, yet constantly overlooked by those naïve public comforters who are always asserting 'it will never happen here'. All the Germans needed in Norway was a tiny minority of accomplices and pro-Nazis, and they did not need any alarming number in either Holland or Belgium. The brain trust in Berlin was much too intelligent to imagine that the masses of Rumanians, Bulgarians, Yugoslavs, or Hungarians could be

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converted to Nazism. Actually, in the autumn of 1940, I should estimate roughly that 90 per cent of the Rumanians and Bulgarians were strongly anti-Nazi; at least 85 per cent of the Yugoslavs, and perhaps more than 70 per cent of the Hungarians. In reality the percentages may have been higher than that, but the Nazis were aiming at the upper 10 per cent in all these countries. If they could line up two or three per cent of the élite, taking care that these were in the right places and had sufficient power, the bloodless conquest of any of these nations could be assured. These tactics worked out perfectly in all four of the above-named Balkan countries except Yugoslavia; and they might have worked there if the public had not learned too much too quickly.

Of course, that is one reason why the Nazis have always exerted every means and every pressure to capture a nation's press as an essential prelude to domination of the country. In Bucharest, as in Paris, a large portion of the press had prostituted itself for years. As a result the Nazis had no trouble in buying up the Rumanian press. In Bulgaria and Yugoslavia that was more difficult, but some editors fell easily into line by one method or another. Editors who resisted all Nazi overtures simply marked themselves for enforced exit the moment the 'New Order' really moved in. Meanwhile the Nazis had been cultivating certain assistants of such editors and promising them editorships and a handsome income if they 'co-operated'. They had worked in this fashion for years and every weapon they used had been sharpened by long practice. So in every controlling aspect of a nation's political and economic life Nazi salesmanship, pressure, and coercion were applied systematically. To-day Vichy is a startling and ominous example of complete success in this technique of undercover conquest, but in the Balkans Rumania and Bulgaria were developed to a point which more than met all necessary requirements.

In fairness it must also be stated that Nazi domination of the Balkans was aided greatly by the ineptitudes, short-sightedness, and frequent stupidity of the British and the French. Before and after the war began, Anglo-French diplo-

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macy in most of these countries was incredibly clumsy, if not unforgivably bad. Nazi diplomacy was much more intelligent as well as more ruthless. But the Germans proved themselves far better businessmen than either the British or the French. You would not think the Germans could conceivably export coffee, cocoa, and tea during war-time. Nevertheless, when they heard the British were negotiating a big deal in these foodstuffs with Bulgaria, the Nazis stepped in and cut the British out by rushing special shipments to the Bulgarians. During the first months of 1940 the Germans sent 1,500 car-loads of beet sugar into Hungary, even though the country should have been able to produce its own sugar. With the Nazis business was political. They would satisfy customers because these Balkan customers must be bound to the Reich and be impressed with German efficiency. Again and again they left the slow-footed British and French holding the bag. Moreover, the capitalist governments were always counting their pennies, and this was a particular sin of the British government's Balkan policy (if it could be called that) all through the vitally important pre-war years. With their totalitarian and anti-capitalistic economy the Nazis never counted money costs but always counted results obtained.

However contradictory it may seem, it was still true that the Nazi propaganda offensive in the Balkans was directed especially at industrialists and capitalists of all kinds. With the Red army in Bessarabia, the Brown Bolsheviks from Berlin, suddenly posing as arch-enemies of all the Bolshevistic tactics which they practised with such infinitely greater efficiency, gravely warned Hungarian, Rumanian, and Bulgarian capitalists against the threatened 'Bolshevization of Europe' if Moscow were left free to expand westward. A great many propertied and wealthy persons in these Balkan countries were deeply impressed; even after the complete amputation of Rumania some of her prominent capitalists and estate-owners consoled themselves that it was necessary, after all, to accept Nazi domination in order to escape the Reds. That also happened in France. After six months of German occupation many of the very Frenchmen who had once pri-

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vately asserted: 'What we need is not a Hitler, but Hitler', were sadly telling friends of mine that they had made the greatest mistake of their lives. Perhaps by now certain Rumanian capitalists have had their eyes opened. But the Nazi 'Red menace' propaganda won many highly placed converts in the Balkan countries and even had a pronounced effect upon one of our American newspaper colleagues. 'Why aren't the British more reasonable?' the Nazi salesmen would ask. 'The British ought to be sensible and call off this war. Look what a horrible mess all Europe is going to be if the war goes on. In spite of all we Nazis can do, whole sections of Europe may be ripe for Bolshevism. We want to set up a New Order that will permit production and trade and prosperity, but if this destruction drags on for too long a time—'

Well, if this destruction were ended by a British capitulation, Europe would be run by Hitler and Nazism. There would be no Moscow 'Bolshevization of Europe'. Instead Europe's millions would simply have Nazi paganism instead of Red paganism, the Gestapo instead of the GPU, an anti-capitalistic Brown totalitarianism instead of a Red one—and a far more terrifyingly powerful military domination than anything the Stalinists could hope to achieve in fifty years. In such a system, buttressed by formidable Nazi efficiency, whose capital would be safe and whose capital would remain in its owners' control? By the time Hitlerism had conquered ten or a dozen countries it would seem that common sense would show quite clearly whether Brown Bolshevism or Red Bolshevism was the central, paralysing menace of the present-day world. Nevertheless, most people have never accustomed themselves to the fact that the most radical revolutionaries of our time can dress well, entertain ingratiatingly, speak with remarkable plausibility—and still direct all their actions toward the destruction of capitalism and free parliamentary government as associated common enemies.

One of the most striking things about the Nazis' advance agents in the Balkan countries was the fact that they played every possible card they had with a maximum of effect. Nothing was too trivial to receive their attention. When I was

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in Budapest my hotel was swamped with German athletes—athletes in the middle of a war. The Nazis had sent a football team and a group of champion boxers for a series of contests with the Hungarians. That was good propaganda—very shrewd psychology. What Hungarian could doubt that the Germans were taking the war in their stride when they carried on sports competitions as usual? Previously a German tennis team had visited Hungary, and when I returned to Bucharest, plans were announced for a number of famous German stars to participate in the international motor-cycle races of the autumn. Wherever you turned you found the Nazis never lost a trick. Remember that amiable White Russian who used to sing and play his guitar out at Zissu's by the lake? You never saw him in the Athence-Palace bar once all summer. Well, he's in the bar every noon now and sometimes in the afternoon. Always very chummy with the British, French, and American correspondents, isn't he? No, you hadn't thought much about it at first. Then one day you heard something, and then somebody whispered something else. Spying for either the Nazis or the Russians, they say. Well, take your choice—but who ever heard of a White Russian working for the Bolsheviks? Of course, this chap had been friendly for months with the English, French, and Americans. No, they never miss a chance.

Cabaret girls—especially in war-time—are always open to suspicion on the ground of espionage; but there are orthodox methods of employing spies and there are other methods which produce much greater results. In one Balkan capital we knew a stranded American vaudeville team who had worked in Germany before the war. One night they told us about the Hungarian dancing girl who had lived in the hotel room next to theirs. She had a Hungarian name, but always spoke English or French with them. The Americans got an unexpected night off and went home and to bed unusually early one evening. They were awakened by a terrific row. A man was shouting in German: 'You damned little———, you're taking the morning train for Istanbul. Understand?' They heard the dancing girl sobbing and then protesting, in



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perfect German: 'No, no. They'll kill me, I tell you. They got Elsa. I can't—' They heard smashing blows and the man cursing. The girl screamed as if she were being beaten half to death. At last they heard her gasping: 'But—I've got—to have money. . . . You haven't—given me any money.' The answer rasped pitilessly: 'Never mind about the money. What the hell do you want money for? You're doing this for the Fatherland—see!'

They never saw the dancing girl again, but they had known others like her. It wasn't important, except for one thing. People used to wonder why the British Intelligence Service had been so much less effective in this war than last time, and why the German spy system operated with impressive thoroughness in most places. Perhaps terrorism had a great deal to do with it. There were many who could not be hired as spies who still would rather act as secret agents than be shot or dumped in a river. You could look at this as an academic European war problem—or you could ask yourself about the innumerable opportunities for this kind of terroristic pressure upon German-Americans, Italian-Americans, and countless others who had relatives and loved ones under the control of Hitler's Gestapo.

By all these methods the 'New Order' insinuated and entrenched itself in every Balkan country. Hitler's advance agents might dress and talk like businessmen or financial advisers, but they worked with greater energy and intelligent direction than any other group of men I have ever seen. They exploited fears and racial and national hatreds. They appealed to greed and social and political ambitions. They promised and gave rich rewards for services rendered. They utilized propaganda with an almost diabolical skill and they knew the weaknesses of every mentality which they approached. Whatever their object, they were undeterred by any scruple of decency or honesty. If conversion would not work, they were equally expert at contamination and corruption. Nothing mattered except the complete triumph of the Nazi revolution and the stupendous prizes in riches and power which would be won by all the élite of the new 'master

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race'. Hitler had shown exactly how it could be done—through ruthlessness and treachery and terrorism and well-calculated dissemination of fear. The Nazi 'salesmen' understood all this thoroughly. For revolution to succeed you must spread moral and social disintegration. The first and most essential conquest must be achieved on the inside. We saw this happening in Rumania, in Bulgaria, in Yugoslavia and Hungary. It is something far more devastating and terrible in its power of paralysis and destruction than all the German armed forces combined. When the Nazi war machine strikes, you can see it. When the Nazi advance agents strike, most people do not even know they are anywhere near; nor, in any case, do they have the slightest conception of what they are doing.

After months of observation of the Nazis' 'inside operations' I came to comprehend that the real warfare in this Second World War is not at all that which correspondents report from battlefields. That is only a final phase of Hitler's war, but in many respects it is the least dangerous. What kind of war would the Nazis use when the time came for them to bring full pressure upon the United States of America? Certainly they would not try invasion right away, even if they took over the entire British and French Fleets. No, they would never try the rash method of direct attack until everything else had been prepared—as in Norway, Holland, Belgium, and France; as in Rumania and Bulgaria. Of course, the Nazis would strike at the roots of American society first. They would send over thousands of 'salesmen' on business trips, and thousands of 'tourists' to inspect the beauties and riches of the North American continent. They would concentrate upon the upper ten or fifteen per cent of our American population; upon the élite and people in key places. They would warn against the dangers of 'Bolshevization of America'; and talk about the 'New Order' and getting on the band-wagon of twentieth-century progress as we had seen them do in the Balkans. Would Americans swallow all that? Well, a sufficient percentage of the upper-class leadership in virtually every European country swallowed it, including a

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considerable number in Great Britain until war came and revealed their folly or discredited them completely. In any case, the Balkans were lost or as good as lost, even in October 1940. But the Nazi technique of internal disruption, disintegration, and corruption is more powerful than it ever was. Every new German military victory spreads new defeatism and fear among countless millions far removed from the scene of battle. Even more than upon green leaves of economic riches and political power, what the Nazi locusts feed upon is fear and defeatism and upon gullibility and greed. If Americans can conquer these things they will never be conquered by the Brown Bolshevism of Nazism.

If—

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## Chapter 10

### A LESSON FROM THE GREEKS

Everything connected with the war on the Greek peninsula started with a bang, including ourselves. When Mussolini sent his Fascist invincibles charging across the Albanian frontier into north-western Greece we were in Bucharest. That's about five hundred miles from Salonika, but, in all fairness to Bulgarian roads and rivers, you could multiply that distance by three and still be charitable. Anyhow, Edmund Stevens had invested in a little German car some time previously, so he invited Russell Hill of the *New York Herald Tribune* and myself to act as ballast and we were off on a moderately insane day-and-night dash across Bulgaria. The first forty minutes out of Bucharest we missed a head-on collision by a few inches and that was more or less symbolic of the rest of the trip.

South of Sofia the country and the roads get rougher and rougher. At the end of October they were also muddier and muddier. It seemed that Bulgarian bridges rarely stayed put. We had ridden through a downpour of rain half of the first night. Steve drove through five or six mountain streams the next afternoon and then we tried one too many in the dark. Just about fifteen feet from the opposite shore we discovered that an automobile, especially a chic, low-slung sports model like Agnes, does not operate successfully in three feet of water. So we stayed there for several hours. The water was icy cold and rising steadily. We collected a great many talkative Bulgarian peasants, and some time before midnight a team of oxen, plus quite a lot of man-power, managed to get our car out of the torrent. We slept in a farmhouse whose occupants possessed neither an egg nor a piece of cheese and spent

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the next day trying to get enough sand out of Agnes's wind-pipe so she could at least cough consecutively. Just about dusk she began to wheeze, after Steve and a couple of alleged mechanics had worked over her for hours. Agnes, I greatly regret to say, was one of those extremely modern night-owl girls. Or maybe she was just born for the blackout. She would act jaded all day long and then perk up as soon as it began to get dark. Maybe that was why Steve was so fond of her. No matter what happened he was always insisting it wasn't Agnes's fault. I have rarely seen an indulgent male more patient with a headstrong, streamlined blond than Steve was with Agnes. But after all she only had two cylinders and she had the very great war-time virtue of averaging about thirty miles on a gallon of petrol—usually after sunset, of course.

Among other things Agnes lost her lights in the Bulgarian river, but on the third night of the war we crossed the border into Greece and started eagerly down the Struma Valley road. A driving rain was falling and visibility registered just about zero when we suddenly overtook a huge peasant cart loaded with what proved to be tables and chairs. When we stopped, Agnes's profile, or what was left of it, lay only a couple of feet from our laps. So we walked into Siderokastron and were royally dined by a dynamic Greek major who sputtered English through his gold teeth like three unsynchronized machine-guns. The next day was devoted exclusively to Agnes, and I, being as mechanically minded as a spring robin, gave invaluable assistance by keeping 120 effervescent Greek children approximately two feet removed from the elbows of Steve and Russ while they worked. We had a couple of air-raid alarms which amounted to nothing. The town was crowded with soldiers and military equipment, but the Greeks didn't seem to be particularly excited. Their children all seemed to regard us as of much greater interest than the war. We learned that Greek villagers and peasants, of whatever age, are obsessed by an amazingly acute and almost child-like curiosity about strangers. Stop your car to buy petrol or make an inquiry, and a swarm of wide-eyed humanity would

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be packed so tightly on all sides you could scarcely open the door and step out.

As night was falling Agnes perked up again and we made about twenty miles this time before she coughed and gave up the ghost. Steve and I hiked several miles for help, got arrested by some alert Greek soldiers, and finally persuaded an officer and a policeman to drive back with us to tow Agnes in. It happened they were mobilizing horses in the blackout that night—and the horses were also black. So our typically zealous driver hit one of the horses and we plunged nose-on and then upside-down into a four-foot ditch. The chauffeur had a nasty cut on the head and the officer an injured shoulder. We had to take them to the hospital in Serres and were relieved to learn that they would be able to go home in the morning. A garage mechanic worked all that day trying to put the cough back into Agnes, but we couldn't leave Serres until the following dawn. Then we had a continuous battle trying to keep a crawling spark of life in Agnes, and at last we reached Salonika at noon on 3 November, having covered the seventy-five miles from the Bulgarian border in exactly eighty-four hours. The Italians had already bombed the centre of Salonika several times and there was plenty of wreckage and broken glass about; but we hadn't been in the city two hours when the bombs were falling again. Two of them burst about fifty yards from the place where Steve and I were trying to lunch, and later we saw a Fascist plane crash in flames a block away, and the Greeks ran to the spot, wild with delight. This war seemed to have started like the real thing.

We had hoped that having our own transportation would enable us to go directly to the northern front somewhere beyond Florina, but Greek army orders were rigidly against it. So as soon as Agnes had been freshened up with batteries and various other things, Steve and I took the Athens road out of Salonika. Steve drove thirteen hours that first day without so much as a stop-over for lunch, but it was the longest and roughest 230 miles we had ever covered in our lives. The road serpentine up and down over several mountain ranges. It was spotted with holes and bumps; often covered with



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rocks and gravel or thick with dust; and the Greek mobilization was churning up at us all the time. Near Kozani we overtook column after column of marching troops and long lines of plodding burros. They were swinging northward toward Florina and had been travelling like this for several days, but the soldiers shouted and waved at us as we crawled past. They were bright-eyed, wiry-built men. They looked strong, all right, even if most of their uniforms were rumpled and messy and seemed about two sizes too big for them. 'Poor devils,' we said. 'What chance have they got against the Italian army? Maybe the Fascists' mechanized divisions are a third of the way to Athens already.' But these little Greeks, like the people in the villages, didn't seem at all worried. They kept going, up and up.

Below Kozani we had to climb, zigzagging ceaselessly for nearly two hours before we got over the first mountain range and cut down across the bottom of the gorge of the Aliakmon River, and then climbed up the shoulder of the ranges just west of Mount Olympus. This was the only road through here and portions of it apparently hadn't improved much since the days of Philip of Macedon. It was very rough riding until at last we struck the plains of Thessaly, where the land lay suddenly green and fertile, and so rolled into the large town of Larissa to be surrounded by the inevitable throng of inquisitive Greeks the moment Steve put on the brakes. Although it was late afternoon, we decided to gamble on covering the next seventy miles to Lamia, which lies just across the valley from Thermopylae. So Agnes purred steadily southward and by dusk was battling mountainous ascents once more. Trucks and all kinds of requisitioned automobiles and wagons and carts rolled at us at an increasing tempo now. Soldiers yelled lustily as the lorries lurched past us. They acted more like college boys homeward bound from a victorious football game than men rushing forward to meet the warriors of Fascism. An open truck bounced towards us. A machine-gun had been set up in it as a precaution against aerial attack. Someone had hung olive branches on the gun and tripod. Behind the gun stood a soldier. He wore his cap over one ear, he had a black

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smudge of a beard, and his uniform looked as if an Albanian goat had slept in it for a week. The soldier stood with his feet braced apart, clutching the gun's tripod. As the truck swerved by he was singing, singing at the top of his voice. A great many of the Greek troops were singing as they passed us. Others yelled and gesticulated, gaily or madly. They acted as if they couldn't wait to lay hands on an Italian.

'What crazy people!' Steve said. 'Don't they know they haven't got a chance?'

Quite evidently the Greeks knew nothing of the sort. It was the first week of the Italian invasion. Fascist divisions were already slashing deeply into Greek territory. Excellent military roads had been built for them all through Albania and they belonged to an army which Mussolini had hardened in Ethiopia and Spain. Fascism had spent more than fifteen years building up a tremendous military machine. What could the dwarfish Greeks do against a machine like that? Well, there was not a military attaché in the Balkans who believed they had even an outside chance. Some of the shrewdest military observers we knew had remarked more than once that of course Mussolini might strike through and take Salonika one of these days, whenever the Axis decided the time was ripe. None of them had ever expressed any faith in the Greek army; none of these Balkan peoples were supposed to be much good with machinery of any kind, and the Greeks were hopelessly small and outclassed anyway. They were small all right, but look at these truckloads of yelling, singing soldiers. They were going to meet enemy forces which were three-to-one superior to them in man-power, superior to them in artillery by eight or ten to one, superior to them in airplanes by at least fifty or one hundred to one—and they went up singing! Were they crazy? Well, it certainly looked that way to us, but could there be a more glorious way for human beings to be insane? Yes, this war would be tough; tough as hell, you could bet, because everything about this hard, sun-baked, mountainous country is like that. But it looked like the real thing. Even before you saw the war it felt that way—maybe because the people acted like that.

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smudge of a beard, and his uniform looked as if an Albanian goat had slept in it for a week. The soldier stood with his feet braced apart, clutching the gun's tripod. As the truck swerved by he was singing, singing at the top of his voice. A great many of the Greek troops were singing as they passed us. Others yelled and gesticulated, gaily or madly. They acted as if they couldn't wait to lay hands on an Italian.

'What crazy people!' Steve said. 'Don't they know they haven't got a chance?'

Quite evidently the Greeks knew nothing of the sort. It was the first week of the Italian invasion. Fascist divisions were already slashing deeply into Greek territory. Excellent military roads had been built for them all through Albania and they belonged to an army which Mussolini had hardened in Ethiopia and Spain. Fascism had spent more than fifteen years building up a tremendous military machine. What could the dwarfish Greeks do against a machine like that? Well, there was not a military attaché in the Balkans who believed they had even an outside chance. Some of the shrewdest military observers we knew had remarked more than once that of course Mussolini might strike through and take Salonika one of these days, whenever the Axis decided the time was ripe. None of them had ever expressed any faith in the Greek army; none of these Balkan peoples were supposed to be much good with machinery of any kind, and the Greeks were hopelessly small and outclassed anyway. They were small all right, but look at these truckloads of yelling, singing soldiers. They were going to meet enemy forces which were three-to-one superior to them in man-power, superior to them in artillery by eight or ten to one, superior to them in airplanes by at least fifty or one hundred to one—and they went up singing! Were they crazy? Well, it certainly looked that way to us, but could there be a more glorious way for human beings to be insane? Yes, this war would be tough; tough as hell, you could bet, because everything about this hard, sun-baked, mountainous country is like that. But it looked like the real thing. Even before you saw the war it felt that way—maybe because the people acted like that.

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The mobilization was going great guns. Everything on wheels in Greece seemed to be rolling up at us. There were street buses from Athens, improvised ambulances, private automobiles of every size and vintage. They rocked and roared endlessly northward. There was a purposefulness about this flood of transport and materials. You would never guess that the Greeks had had no warning. This mobilization was hitting on all sixteen cylinders; it was organized—and that seemed the greatest contradiction of all. Who would believe that these sun-basking, coffee-sipping, slothful-looking Greeks could move like this? Remember how you used to see them sitting idly for hours in their cafés, or lounging lazily in their shop doorways absently fingering the strings of yellow beads which they carried around with them all day long. Foreigners were always joking about the bead-fondling Greeks and how they managed to live with a minimum of physical exertion. How many visitors had actually ever seen a Greek hurry? No, the pace of the Greeks had always seemed to be throttled down to the sun-drenched, sluggish tempo of the Mediterranean, where people sat in the shade and talked for the joy of talking. Things had looked very much like that in Larissa, too, but on the road Greeks were moving as we had never dreamed they could move. Something had happened. Something new was in the air. Something was in the voices of the soldiers when they shouted and when they sang. Well, it might be over in another month, but perhaps these little Greeks would put up a show while they were at it. What was it the Greek engineer at Serres had said? 'We shall have the last word. We! Not these tyrannies!' The lorries and carts rumbled past us to the same refrain. It was good, wonderfully good to be in Greece at this moment.

But Agnes was coughing and wheezing again now and there was nothing pleasant about that, with night closing down on us and the mountain road hairpinning round one precipice after another. The road, like virtually all Greek and Albanian mountain roadways, was unguarded by walls. Its edge simply fell away, sometimes ten or thirty feet and sometimes fifty feet or a hundred. When the trucks lunged at us in

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the dark, you took what room you could get and prayed to God that it wouldn't be a few inches short. Steven had been at the wheel for nearly twelve hours now. We were over the crest and on the down grade toward Lamia, but the curves and the sheer drops were ghastly. Finally a legion of vehicles caught us on the edge of a cliff, and Agnes now had only half of one eye and that on the wrong side. For nearly an hour we sat there, on the thin edge of Kingdom Come, and I counted seventy-eight lorries as they lunged wickedly up at us out of the black night and swept past Agnes's left fender with but three or four inches to spare. In the face of more and more cars we crept down the mountain, now without any headlights at all; and I was leaning out trying to find the edge of the road with a weak flashlight. When at last we crawled out of the car in Lamia, we were much more limp than if we had been through several bombings. There is one thing about a falling bomb: either you know or you don't know. Suspense is welcomely telescoped.

The next morning we climbed the narrow, twisting defile of Thermopylae and Steve was oozing with pride over the way Agnes had recovered her spirits. Thermopylae is a majestic giant of granite and the valley spread wondrously green and peaceful below us with Lamia beyond it, a glistening gem out of the diadem of ancient Greece. We talked of Leonidas and the Spartans who had died here centuries before Christ; and I looked down the steep, knotted trail by which we had ascended, wondering whether the Italians would ever be able to break through here, yet little dreaming that there would be a second great Battle of Thermopylae within a few months. After all, the Fascists possessed crushingly overwhelming air power. They should be able to conquer the Greeks from the air. But that brought us back to the inexplicable thing which had astonished and dumbfounded us all the way down from Salonika. Where were the Italian planes? Why were they not bombing the road and the bridges? Why, after a week of war, did they allow the Greek mobilization to continue uncurbed and unimpeded when there were only three main roads over which Greek troops could be moved up to the Epirus front?

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All day yesterday we had travelled over one of these vital arteries of communications. Again and again we crossed bridges which a single flight of a dozen bombing planes could easily have destroyed. That was equally true of railroad bridges which we sighted from time to time. Salonika and Patras and several Greek towns had been bombed and bombed again, but not a single Fascist bomb had been dropped anywhere along the four-hundred-mile highway from Salonika down to Athens. If these singing Greeks were crazy, then the Italian high command must be completely gaga. Direct hits on three or four of those bridges would have done more to defeat the half-mobilized Greek army than thirty raids on Salonika. Perhaps the keen-eyed Greek Minister in Sofia had known exactly what he was talking about when he declared everything would be all right if only the Greeks were able to complete their mobilization in the first twelve days.

So we were in Athens, and the Athenians were acting very much as the Finns had acted, at least as far as calm spirits and steady nerves were concerned. Except for the blackout and the rigid guard of gendarmes around government buildings and the Grand Bretagne Hotel, life seemed almost normal. Air alarms were few and no planes came over Athens. British officers had already arrived and one or two R.A.F. squadrons were installed at the airfield outside the city. With the British several American and English correspondents, accredited to the forces in Egypt, had appeared, and one of them, to my great joy, was Ralph Barnes of the *Herald Tribune*. We all lived at the King George, next door to the Grand Bretagne, where Premier-General John Metaxas and high army officers had their headquarters. Below my window in the plaza old men and women sat sunning themselves most of the day, and the Acropolis reared its majestic hulk like an ocean liner riding the rooftops of the city. After midnight, in the thin light of the rounding moon, the Parthenon's imperial splendour was darkened and subdued into a single magnificent, mysterious outline against the night sky. Then Athens slept in a strange new stillness which she had not known for uncounted

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centuries, and the silence seemed to breathe the words of Sappho: 'It is midnight and time passes. . . .' Until another bright daybreak the war was far away.

The first two weeks of Italy's invasion had passed and already something almost incredible had happened. The Fascists, after capturing Konitsa, just inside the central Albanian-Greek frontier, had pushed their way up a saw-toothed valley almost to Metsovo and then the handful of defending Greeks had rained a havoc of hot lead down upon them. The invaders had been cut off and decimated. Hundreds had drowned trying to escape in the turbulent waters of the Aaos River. The Greeks had begun to fight.

And on November 16 we saw five British cruisers glide into the harbour of Piræus, edge over to the quays, and disgorge several thousand men—ground crews and supply units and anti-aircraft batteries for the R.A.F. Those five cruisers made perfect targets for Italian bombers, but Mussolini's air force was still busy waging war on women and children. The Britishers piled into waiting trucks, and Ralph Barnes (always covering every last angle of every story) piled in with them. A tremendous throng of Greek civilians cheered the Tommies deliriously as they rode up to Athens singing *Tipperary* at the top of their voices. 'My eye,' said a London Ak-Ak lad, 'it's bloody good to be where you're really popular for once.' That night Athens's Argentina nightclub witnessed some of the wildest terpsichorean capers that Athenians had seen in many a long year and two R.A.F. boys, dancing together with a lithe brown-eyed Greek girl, put a five-star seal upon the Anglo-Greek alliance. After midnight the streets echoed with *South of the Border* and *Tipperary*. A few nights previously I had had a birthday and at the close of our dinner at the King George a waiter marched in with a huge cake. It had forty-one candles and its frosting bore the legend: 'Too young to cover a war.' Steve and Ralph had been responsible for that. Well, the Greeks and the British, all of us, were feeling gloriously young. This was the first war I had ever been to—or rather the first since Spain—where people, in spite of everything, persisted in being gay.



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But behind their high spirits the Greeks knew all the sober, heartbreaking cost of their desperate struggle for freedom. When they laughed they laughed with the laughter of the brave. Sometimes, and as suddenly, smiles died upon their lips. One day we were riding up a main boulevard in a taxi when cheering crowds blocked the street before us. People were waving and shouting and throwing flowers. We leaped out and hurried over. They were tossing flowers in the windows of an autobus. We saw a long row of buses. They were filled with the first wounded to be brought back to Athens. In the first bus a soldier with a bandaged head lay flat on a stretcher. He had also been wounded in the body, for he couldn't lift himself; but he was twisted sideways, holding up a rose in each hand, waving them at the crowd—and smiling. The buses came one after another and men and women cheered, some of them with sobs in their throats. Then I saw one soldier who was being held half-upright by a nurse. I could see no bandages, but there was something wrong with his face. He couldn't quite smile. As the bus passed right beside me I tiptoed and looked inside. Both the soldier's legs were gone—shot off. But he was waving a flower, waving it slowly and waving again as the bus was lost in the crowd. We started to walk back to the hotel. Two Greek girls of about twenty were also walking away, one of them darkly beautiful as Athenian women often are. Her lips were trembling and she was brushing the tears from her eyes. All down the street a hush had fallen. Later on busloads of wounded came much more often.

On 22 November, only twenty-six days after Mussolini launched his 'parade to Athens', Greek troops drove the Fascists from a formidable range of mountains and captured Koritsa, the principal city in western Albania. When the news reached Athens I saw the first victory celebration in fifteen months of reporting the war. From all quarters of the metropolis church bells clanged madly. Tens of thousands of Athenians poured into the street. White and blue flags, the same white and blue as the colours of Finland, mushroomed from every building. Truckloads of singing, cheering soldiers

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and boys of the Greek youth movement roared through the streets. Balconies were jammed with people. Flowers showered down upon the swaying, jubilant mass of humanity in Stadium Street. Greek and British soldiers hugged one another and pushed their way, arm in arm, toward Constitution Plaza. Here came two Greeks with a British Tommy on their shoulders. The Tommy wore a red plaid overseas cap and clutched a Greek flag in one hand and some chrysanthemums in the other. People were mad with joy, shouting and embracing and kissing one another. Bands blared fiercely and endlessly and young Greeks yelled in chorus. 'We want Tirana, too. We want Tirana!' Athens went to bed very late that night. Yes, if these people knew how to fight, they also knew how to celebrate a victory. This was one of several things which Mussolini would never be able to take away from them.

So the Greeks fought with the dauntless fire of their ancestors, and the world marvelled. Just after Koritsa we went to the front at last. Agnes was very trim and smart in her cream-coloured coat, not at all intended for war-time travels in the Epirus mountains. But Agnes did her noble best until a Greek motor cycle knocked one of her front wheels off on the return trip from Corfu and Igumenitsa. In a borrowed car Steve and I went up to Koritsa and Pogradetz on Lake Ochrida. Everywhere the mountain-eating Greeks, however muddy and hungry and soaked with rain, yelled and gesticulated. They would shout: 'Macaroni!' and make devilishly appropriate gestures. Sometimes we passed them where they lay like corpses on rocks beside the road, asleep from exhaustion. Columns of troops and mules covered miles of the back-breaking mountain roads. In all those days from one end of the war zone to the other I never met a single down-hearted or complaining Greek soldier. Sometimes they had trudged for fifteen hours through rain and snow, yet they could always smile. It seemed they had bodies of iron to match hearts like lions'.

One night we drove back down the Koritsa-Leskovik road and came to the place on the Albanian frontier where the

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bridge had been blown up and the Greeks had built an emergency pontoon crossing. It had rained steadily for two days and the trucks had churned the meadow approach into a deep, thick soup of mud. Now, at ten at night, the cold was bitter and penetrating. Our headlights revealed scores of soldiers working in the darkness. They had no lantern or light of any kind, but were passing rocks from one to another and laying them in the ruts. Their shoes were soggy and sloshing with mud and water. The soldiers plunged their arms down into the mud up to their elbows, fitting the rocks in place by feeling alone. They worked steadily and swiftly; more swiftly now because those nearest to us at last had a few minutes of light in which to labour. As we drove by I saw their mud-caked hands and spattered faces and grimy beards. They were the hands of men who hold freedom at its eternal value. They were the hands which were keeping the Greek advance rolling on and on into Albania. Above all, they were the hands with which Mussolini did not reckon. They were strong hands and, if you saw them as I did, they were beautifully and wonderfully clean. All the mud in these wild, untamable valleys would never change that. It makes a difference when people fight with clean hands.

Long afterward people asked me repeatedly how the Greeks defeated the Fascist army. Although it may seem premature to mention it here, I think this is as good a place as any to offer my own explanation. On this first trip, from one end of the Greek-Albanian front to the other and covering some two hundred and fifty miles from the island of Corfu up to Lake Ochrida far to the north, we saw all that anyone needed to know about what lay behind the Greek victories. By the end of December, and in two short months, the Greeks had battered Mussolini's troops to the very verge of a final knockout blow and only the ruthless bitterness of winter and the formidable Albanian mountains saved them from being driven into the Adriatic Sea. But even in early December the Greek soldiers had proved what they so often asserted, that one Greek soldier was worth five or ten Fascist soldiers. But how and why did the little Greek army drive the Italians

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back and backward, scoring one astonishing triumph after another?

On the basis of my own experiences and observations I would list six reasons, in the order of their relative importance:

1. The fighting hearts of the entire Greek people.
2. The extraordinary unity of the Greek people.
3. The remarkably high calibre of the Greek general staff, combined with the fact that virtually all officers, from the rank of lieutenant-colonel upward, were fighting in their fourth war.
4. The startling inefficiency of the Italian general staff and the extremely poor direction of the Italian air force.
5. Pronounced lack of combative spirit and an understandable lack of conviction (even respect for what they were commanded to do) on the part of the Fascist soldiers.
6. The highly important aid given by the British air force and British naval units where the Greeks most needed help.

I am certain that all six of these reasons were definite factors in the Greeks' military successes, but without the first three the Greek miracles could never have happened. In this respect the fighting spirit and the extraordinary unity of the Greek people were by all odds the most significant. The Greeks knew they would fight, whether they had a chance or not. The little, sloppily uniformed Greek soldier never entertained the shadow of a doubt about his combative superiority to one or a dozen Italians. The Greek people, utterly disregarding the long and bitter feud which had divided them between partisans of the Metaxas dictatorship and the republicans whom Metaxas had overthrown, completely buried all party animosities and formed a solid phalanx as Greeks. To understand what this meant, after years of rivalry and hatred, an American must consider what an unbelievable accomplishment it would be if—to-day or to-morrow, at a moment of great national danger—every anti-Rooseveltian citizen should abandon all hatred of Franklin D. Roosevelt for the duration of the war. This was what happened with the Greeks.

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We spent our first day at the front with General Lavranos and Captain Alex Melas. The captain had been a deputy, a republican deputy, in the parliament which Metaxas dissolved, and until the war came he had been an exile from the Metaxas régime. 'I am a lifelong republican,' Captain Melas told us. 'I tell you frankly I am only here because, first of all, I am a Greek. Two months ago I would never have spoken to the general here. Isn't that so, General?' General Lavranos was an army man of the old school. 'Yes, that's quite true,' he said. 'The captain and I have been political enemies for years. But all that does not matter any more. Nothing matters except to defeat the Fascists. We Greeks are no longer republicans and Metaxans. We are all Greeks. That's why Mussolini can never defeat us.'

On New Year's Eve Premier Metaxas told me exactly the same thing. I had asked him if it had not been difficult for him to decide that Greece would fight. 'No, it was not difficult,' he replied. 'I knew the Greek people, that was all. I knew that any Greek, man or woman and no matter of what rank in society, how rich or how humble—I knew that *any* Greek in my position would have done exactly what I was doing. You have seen the Greek army and the Greek people. Is it not true?'

Yes, it was true; unanimously, inspiringly, magnificently true. That is the glory that is Greece. And that, I believe, is the great and enduring lesson from the Greek for all human beings who desire to remain free through and beyond the twentieth century's world revolution. Will the American people understand this? Look in your heart and you shall see one vital figment of the ultimate answer.

## Chapter 11

### EVEN THE VERY STRONGEST

**L**isten, fellow. You'll never guess where I've been!' Ralph's face was beaming and his eyes had that triumphant glint which usually resulted when he had done something which no other newspaperman had thought of or had considered possible. He stood towering above me in his big, double-breasted army greatcoat, simply burning with energy and enthusiasm. Those months on the desert had made him wonderfully fit. This was my third day in Athens, but Ralph, coming over from Egypt, had beat me in by a day or two. You could never tell what kind of inside stunt he might have fixed up in that time.

'Probably getting an exclusive interview with Metaxas or King George,' I hazarded.

'Hell no. Don't be an ass! Listen. *I've been on the Acropolis!*'

A staggering smack across my back accompanied this information, incidentally making a far greater impression upon me than the information itself.

'What of it?' I snorted. 'So have I been on the Acropolis. I went all over it ten years ago. It's a wonderful place, but what's—'

'Golly Moses, Lee! Where in the devil have you been? Do you mean to say you didn't know they've barred all visitors from the Acropolis since the war began? It's absolutely forbidden for anybody to go up there. I tell you I've—'

'Okay, Field-Marshal. Okay. If I'd known that, of course I'd have known—'

'Well, I *crashed* the Acropolis. I've spent the whole afternoon up there and it's not supposed to be open, even for British officers. I wandered all around the place for three

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hours. . . . How did I get in? Oh, I just talked to one or two people up there.'

'Yes, I know. You could talk a blind man into second sight, Barnes. But don't break my back the next time you do it. So they've got the Acropolis locked up. I was hoping to visit it again.'

'Oh, we can get in, all right. We'll go up together. But don't steal my story. I'm going to write a story on the Acropolis---as soon as I run through these books and get freshened up on ancient history.'

So Ralph went to work organizing to file a dispatch with the dateline: 'Acropolis, Greece'. We kidded him about it a good deal because it was part of loving Ralph Barnes to josh him about his incurable enthusiasms. At forty-one he still had the heart and spirit of a cub reporter, but that was why he was a king among reporters. He was tall and straight and broad-shouldered, inside as well as out; and it was great fun to have Ralph as the natural leader and spark-plug of our Anglo-American group, which now numbered about fifteen correspondents. I had known Ralph much longer than any of the others, since we had both gone abroad to work in Paris in the summer of 1926; but during the war he had worked with various members of our group, in Germany or England, or in the Balkans, in Turkey or Egypt. Here in Athens we had already dubbed him 'the Field-Marshal'. He had the physique and looked very handsome in his uniform of a correspondent accredited to the British Forces, Middle East Command. 'Ask the Field-Marshal,' someone would say and Ralph would grin deprecatingly. It took an awful lot to ruffle his good nature. Being so deadly in earnest about things, he invited an excessive amount of leg-pulling from his friends, yet he took it all as a St. Bernard takes the nips and tugs of a litter of terrier pups. Newspaper comrades easily fell into the pleasant pastime of ribbing Ralph Barnes, but they learned very quickly that he was the sternest kind of reporting competition they were likely to meet in a lifetime. In every major European capital correspondents had learned that. It was true wherever Barnes of the *Herald Tribune* happened to be.

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'Field-Marshal' was a tag that fitted in more ways than one.

In the first days of the war the American and British correspondents in Athens were not, strictly speaking, one group. We were split by the fact that the half-dozen men who had come from Egypt were uniformed and officially accredited to the British forces. The rest of us had civilian status, although several (like Sam Brewer and I) were waiting for our final papers to come through from the War Office in London. We were all bending every effort to get the necessary Greek army passes which would enable us to go to the Albanian front. The 'artists in uniform', as someone called them, naturally were trying to capitalize their favoured position with the British. They had rushed over from Cairo expecting the Greeks would afford them special facilities, but the Greek command was adamant. It would have no war correspondents under foot in the fighting zones until the invading Fascists had been thrown back on their haunches and the situation had been stabilized. From a military viewpoint that was common sense. From the journalistic standpoint it was just too bad. Nevertheless, Ralph would never admit that a door was locked even after the keys had been dropped down a well, and he and his uniformed colleagues held several councils of war in the King George's café.

'Listen, Lee. I'm awfully embarrassed about this situation,' he said to me one night. 'You know, we are accredited and, after all, we've been with the British for months now. If we can possibly get off to the front before you fellows, we've got to do it. I hate like hell to see you get left behind, if we get away with it; but our group has simply got to stick together. I wish you were accredited. It would be wonderful. I hope you'll understand. All I can say is, you fellows ought to get organized. We're going to use every bit of pressure we can bring.'

The Greek high command would not be budged, so the accredited correspondents had to look to the R.A.F. for inside stories of some sort; something that would give them an exclusive-feature angle of one kind or another on the first stages of the war in Greece. That was how Ralph and his group



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finally won permission to accompany the British bombers on a night flight over Italian or Albanian ports. They were the only ones who could do that, because they were accredited. Meanwhile they were pressing Tommy Wisdom, the R.A.F. press officer, for every aviation story they could get. Tommy had been with them on the Libyan desert, so he knew all about Ralph's persistence. 'Well, if here isn't old Beefer Barnes,' Tommy would say as he joined our round-table after dinner. 'What's wrong with the war to-day, Beefer? And what about that story you were going to write on the Acropolis?'

Ralph dismissed it all with a grin and retaliated by hammering Tommy about front trips. 'It's ridiculous, Tommy. After all, you know as well as I do that our papers want real copy, not just a bunch of communiqués.'

'Now wait a minute, Ralph. You haven't interviewed the Delphi oracle yet, have you? There's a wizard of a story. "Seated to-day on the time-worn stones where the ancient Greeks came to consult the oracle at Delphi, your correspondent was reliably informed—"'

'Oh, the hell with you, Wisdom. The trouble with you is you can't even take a war seriously. Listen, I've got an idea. I've got to see you about something important.'

'Oh, my God!' Tommy would sigh woefully. 'Barnes has got another idea.'

But if anyone got the absolute maximum of co-operation out of Squadron Leader Wisdom and his entire staff it was Ralph. Tommy had worked on a London daily before the war. 'Ralph?' he said to me one night. 'Say, he's the best newspaperman that ever came to Cairo since the show started. You ought to have seen how the boys took to him down on the desert. He can spot a story faster than any man I've ever seen. Great fellow, old Beefer!'

The next day Ralph launched his second offensive against the Acropolis, but this time he had to be accompanied by two representatives from the Greek press office. One of them firmly insisted he couldn't take his typewriter up there. 'But who ever heard of a newspaperman writing a story in long-

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hand?' stormed the Field Marshal. 'It's ridiculous—absolutely ridiculous!' Nevertheless, he would go through with it now, regardless of obstacles, and he poured into that dispatch the fruits of several days of laborious historical research. Why? Because he was convinced that American readers could not truly understand this present Greek war unless they took into consideration the long and glorious traditions of Greece; and because he had always believed that contemporary political events were rooted in a people's past. That was why Ralph was for ever lugging a fat volume of ancient Greek history around with him in Athens. Away back in 1929, while covering the Young conference for the Paris *Herald*, he had carried a couple of books on reparations, the latest copy of the London *Economist*, and several other financial periodicals around with him day after day. Sam Dashiell called him the 'ambulating kiosk' in those days. In July, after being expelled from Germany, Ralph spent two weeks with us in Bucharest. When we slipped away to the swimming pool for lunch he brought along a thousand-page history of Rumania. One noon he sat out in the broiling sun for two hours, absorbing a mixture of violet rays and authoritative information on the remote origins of the Rumanian people. He would only be in Rumania long enough to file about ten dispatches. I never met another correspondent who gave such unceasing effort to the mastery of background as well as contemporary developments.

'Ralph is an amazing fellow,' Martin Agronsky of N.B.C. remarked one day. 'You know, I'm just a beginner compared with him, but I never knew anyone who had so much enthusiasm. He always has to know everything about everything. Down in Libya he had to know just how they loaded the bombs and how the gunners operated. He asked more questions than the rest of us put together. Out in the desert he got interested in the stars, so he bought several books on astronomy as soon as we got back to Cairo. You've known Ralph a long time. Was he always like that?'

'He couldn't be any other way and be Ralph Barnes, could he?'

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'No, I guess you're right. You know, he's done an awful lot to help us younger fellows.'

In Bucharest and in Athens correspondents who met Ralph for the first time were invariably astonished at the amount of ground he covered reportorially. Usually they were surprised when they learned the breadth and variety of his experience in Europe. As a matter of fact only a few of his older colleagues knew that he possessed a background which no other living American or British correspondent had equalled. He had worked in Paris for four years, had been Rome correspondent of the *Herald Tribune* for two years, had followed this with four years as Moscow correspondent; then he had served nearly three years as a Berlin correspondent, and had been chief of his newspaper's London bureau when the war broke out. During these fourteen years Ralph Barnes had become a legend in post-war journalism. Among a band of foreign correspondents which included many colourful personalities and world-famous names, he was in many ways the most vivid character of them all. In Paris, Rome, Moscow, Berlin, or London you always encountered a wealth of tales about the human dynamo and 'ambulating kiosk' from Oregon. Wherever he had gone he had defied official red tape, charmed critical government spokesmen, broken precedents, and run his professional competition ragged. Within one week in Bucharest he had made scores of useful contacts, knew all the key people in both the British and the German legations, and commanded the respect of British and Germans alike. As I watched him in action, perfectly at ease and sure of his ground, I was reminded of the trip we took to the Portsmouth naval base in the first months of the war.

That was the night I shattered the dearest traditions of His Britannic Majesty's navy by attending an officers' mess attired in a burgundy-coloured shirt with necktie to match. The fact that we had not been warned to bring dinner jackets made this particular function an unheard-of affair, but what made it a tremendous success (although he himself did not realize it) was Ralph Barnes. After the final toast to the King (which, I was later assured, no male had ever before drunk in

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red-necktied splendour at a British naval officers' dinner) we had an opportunity to chat with some of the keenest, most impressive officers in the British armed services. They asked all sorts of pertinent questions about Germany, so someone said: 'Ask Barnes. He worked a long time in Germany.' Then they asked about Russia and somebody said the same thing. When they got around to Italy and France, Barnes was still having the ball passed to him. These officers were extremely well informed, but they were soon hammering Ralph with questions. He answered quietly and factually. 'No, I wouldn't quite say that. You see, Stalin also has to take into consideration . . .' British naval captains and commanders listened avidly. They were obviously impressed, and the one person in the room who was not conscious of this fact was the big, bear-like Oregonian who, after fourteen years in Europe, was as unmistakably American as Will Rogers or a Texas longhorn. That night I stood on the edge of the circle feeling very much as Ralph Barnes's father would have felt if he had been there. This was one of the first newspaper assignments Ralph and I had covered together since the days when he had worked as my assistant in the *Herald Tribune's* Paris bureau ten years before. 'How he has grown!' I thought. 'My lord, how the man has grown!' In one way, although he was completely unconscious of the fact, the glory was all Ralph's that night. In another way a proud and happy part of it was mine.

Not that there had ever been any lack of quality about Ralph Barnes as a young reporter just learning the ropes of foreign correspondence. No bureau chief ever had a more eager and indefatigable assistant than he, nor a more loyal friend. He had always had all the instincts of an exceptionally great reporter. He had simply realized his capacities as few men, in any profession, ever succeed in doing. His zeal had been tempered with experience; his natural frankness and straightforwardness were disciplined by an absolute essential scepticism. For years he had dealt with Fascist propagandists, with Soviet propagandists, and with Nazi propagandists. They could never doubt his fairness, but they could never

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make a dent upon his integrity. When they tried to put something over on him Ralph would stare at totalitarian officials with a sharp, boring glance from his slightly protruding blue eyes. Then he would smile and ask gently: 'You don't expect me to believe that, do you?' It was almost impossible for them not to like the man, and those who tried to budge him learned to their sorrow it was wasted effort. Sometimes his lack of humour and intense earnestness simply paralysed the totalitarian press gods, as when he wrathfully informed a Fascist censor in Rome one day: 'You can censor what you want—but I *won't* have you interfering with my objectivity!' Small wonder that the Italian press chief, after Ralph's departure, resignedly confessed to Joseph Phillips that he felt as though an earthquake had passed.

After all, there had always been a great deal of volcanic quality about the Field-Marshal. To a considerable degree that accounted for the legend which he had built across Europe. I had long delighted to tell about the night, during the 1929 reparations conference, when Thomas W. Lamont received a sharp dressing down from the junior member of the *Herald Tribune's* Paris bureau. Ralph and I had dug up a scoop on the severe German conditions which threatened to jam the protracted negotiations. As press representative for the American legation Tommy Lamont had indicated to the German legation's Dr. Kastl that we had stated the leak had come from the Germans. While I was busy in my inside room Ralph got Tommy on the phone. By the time I reached the outer office he was going great guns. 'Do you appreciate, Mr. Lamont, what you have done? Mr. Stowe and I have been cultivating the Germans for weeks. Now all our work is ruined. Dr. Kastl says we have falsely accused him of giving out this information. Now, it happens that Mr. Stowe dug up the first of these conditions, and they came from entirely different sources. But now the Germans will never believe. . . . Well, Mr. Lamont, that is unfortunately the impression which Dr. Kastl got, in any case. It seems to me the only fair thing for you to do is to call him up and explain the misinterpretation. After all, we didn't have to tell you that we had this

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story. How can we continue to co-operate if you spoil our news sources. We simply can't afford to have the German delegates' confidence in us destroyed.'

The torrent of Ralph's protest flowed on and on until he finally culminated by declaring: 'And moreover, Mr. Lamont, do you realize that the wheels of the *Herald Tribune* bureau have been stopped dead by this for the last forty-five minutes?' I had never heard anything quite like this in my life, and neither, most assuredly, had the suave and seemingly imperturbable partner of J. P. Morgan.

'What did Tommy say to that last one?' I asked Ralph when at last he hung up. Ralph laughed.

'I guess it was funny,' he confessed. 'Maybe I was rather hard on Tommy. You know what he said at the end? "But really, Mr. Barnes, you *have* waked me up at one o'clock in the morning quite a number of times." I hope I wasn't impolite—but Golly Moses!'

During those high-pressure days Ralph and I had sworn we'd get hold of a copy of the conference's plan for an international bank before it was released officially for publication—if that could humanly be done. We cultivated certain people in all seven delegations day after day, and one day Ralph came in with the text of the first half of the plan, his face exultant, swinging his arms, simply overjoyed. It was the absolute McCoy, but we needed the second half; so I managed to get that, and we almost upset the conference. Later on I was awarded a Pulitzer prize for my coverage of the Young conference. Through four long months I had worked extremely hard and had written all the stories for New York, but a great deal of credit also belonged to Ralph Barnes. When the award was announced he was one of the first to write me a glowing letter of congratulation. In those days I had been able to give him a number of pointers because I had been in newspaper work considerably longer than he had. Now, in London or Bucharest or Athens, I could learn a great deal from him. Yes, he had grown, and he had taken such big strides it was almost impossible to keep up with him.

The legend of Ralph Barnes was a spontaneous, unwitting

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creation of his character. Friends would tell how he upset the fixed routine of correspondents in Moscow by dashing off to all corners of the Soviet Union; how he travelled 'hard' in the cheapest coaches and gathered fleas and bedbugs in order to find out about the life of the Russian peasants; how he slipped away, defying the anger of Soviet officialdom, in order to get the first-hand story of the terrible Ukraine famine of 1932-3; how he scooped all the Moscow veterans by somehow getting hold of the report card of Stalin's son; how he bluffed his way into the heart of the German army manoeuvres of 1936, waving a worthless 'pass' and overawing storm-troopers and sentries; how he got aboard the Zeppelin *Hindenburg* for its first transatlantic crossing before even his home editors had quite made up their minds whether they wanted him to make the flight or not; how he actually crashed the GPU headquarters in Moscow, the only foreign journalist ever to penetrate that formidable sanctum, and got himself locked up and nailed into a telephone booth there—with a cup of tea for company and GPU men standing guard outside. The wake of the Barnes tornado was strewn with stories like this from one end of Europe to the other, but the essence of all such incidents was a stupendous energy and an all-consuming conviction that real reporting can never be second-hand. Who else but Ralph Barnes would think of perching himself on top of Lenin's tomb in the Red Square to write a story? What other American correspondent, times without number, would sit up all night reading one or two volumes on any conceivable subject before he felt qualified to write a Sunday feature story of no more than eight hundred words? Ever since the day he wrote his first newspaper story Ralph Barnes had gone to school as a major part of his job. The casual reader of his dispatches would never be aware of all this, nor of the further fact that his Moscow post had deprived him of the company of his wife and two small daughters for almost two years at a stretch. There had also been long years of unrelaxed physical strain such as the ordinary reporter would not and could not have imposed upon himself. But all these things together accounted for the extra-

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ordinary respect which he commanded from British naval officers or Nazi army officers, from Soviet bureaucrats or from R.A.F. youngsters flying over Libya and now over Albania.

'How did Ralph get to go on that bombing flight down in Libya?' I asked Tommy Wisdom. 'I didn't know the R.A.F. allowed correspondents to go with the bombers.'

'We never had before—not in the Middle East, anyhow. But you know how it is with the Field-Marshal when he gets his mind on something. We'd been out on the desert several days. One day Ralph comes up to me and says: "Listen, Tommy. Bish wants to take me on a raid with him." I tried to talk him out of it. Told him it wasn't supposed to be done. He had his heart set on it. How could you really tell what a bombing raid was like if you'd never been on one? Finally I told him if Bish asked him to take a little ride and I didn't know anything about it—well, I couldn't give permission for a jaunt like that, but of course if it had already happened—I made one thing very clear. Even if he went, maybe the censorship wouldn't pass his story; so why go to all that trouble when the story might be spiked anyway? Well, you know Ralph. He was perfectly willing to take a chance on the censors' passing the story. So he slipped away with Bish on a daylight raid. He wrote a perfectly swell story—the best story anybody has yet written out of Libya. Sure they passed it. You can trust Ralph for that. I wish we had ten men like him, covering this war here right now. I mean ten reporters who were almost as good. Yes, there's only one Ralph Barnes. God, you should have seen him playing rugger with the boys of Seventy-seven Squadron out on the desert. He bloody well laid a couple of them out flat.'

On Saturday, 16 November, there was considerable excitement among the accredited correspondents. We still could not go to the front, but they had won permission to accompany the R.A.F. bombers on a series of night raids over the week-end. They had drawn lots to determine who should go first and Martin Agronsky and another chap were the lucky ones. They went out late Saturday night. Their planes bombed the port of Brindisi and things were plenty hot. Sunday noon



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they told us how they had to fly back and forth as much as five times before they found the target. The Italians' Ak-Ak had been bursting around them all the time, sometimes throwing the planes around madly. It sounded like a very nasty business. Martin had a wonderful broadcast, but I couldn't convince myself that any broadcast was worth that much—or any newspaper story either. It's one thing when you get caught under machine-gun or artillery fire and can't help it. Ditto for bombs in a raid. But flying at night over these God-awful Albanian mountains and down over ports where the Fascists are waiting for you! Well, I wished with all my heart that Ralph wasn't going; but he had his heart set on it and was all steamed up getting things ready. It was his turn to-night. Five or six of us had dinner with Ralph that evening. We joked and kidded because we didn't want him to know we wished the whole business was over. Ralph was pretty high-strung, but no more than he always was over any chance at an unusual story. He was always thinking of a dozen things at the last moment, no matter where he was going. Martin told him to put on all the warm clothes he could possibly wear. It was damnably cold and they might be in the air as much as seven hours. Nobody knew where they were going. It wasn't apt to be a repeat performance over Brindisi. That would be asking for trouble. More likely the R.A.F. would be taking a crack at Valona or Durazzo on the Albanian side of the Adriatic.

Since his uniform was much too light-weight, Ralph had abandoned it for his heavy brown woollen suit, the same one I had admired on our trip to Portsmouth. Somebody said: 'The Field-Marshal wants to get shot for a spy. Wait till he comes parachuting down in civilians and the Italians grab him.' There was a lot of crazy talk like that and the waiter was terribly slow at serving. Ralph kept calling him back and saying: 'Make it as fast as you can, please. I've got to leave here in another half-hour.' So we all ate rather quickly, and Clare Hollingworth remembered she had some apples that Ralph could take in his pockets. There was plenty of room in his greatcoat and we kidded him about the coat, too, be-

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cause he was so very proud of it, always pointing out it was a 'regulation' British private's coat—no fancy officer's stuff, just the regulation issue. 'Golly Moses! I won't be able to smoke for six hours or more,' Ralph said. 'That's going to be the toughest part of it.' I had laid in a supply of chewing gum upstairs, and I had that kind of feeling of wanting very much to be doing something for someone before he goes away. So I got several packages of chewing gum and Ralph said: 'Gee, that's swell, Lee.' Then it was time for Ralph to leave. We couldn't go out to the field with him. It would look too much like exaggerating the danger of the flight. You couldn't say that you wished he wasn't going. In a war you have to live by the rules. You have to treat life-or-death just as it is. So we couldn't make any fuss. It was better just to pull Ralph's leg as we were always doing, and better for all of us to laugh as much as we could.

Then we were down in the lobby of the King George and Ralph was all bundled up in his greatcoat, his pockets bulging with apples and gloves. It was nearly eleven-thirty and the flight was scheduled to take off about one in the morning. Monday morning, that was. Ralph pulled out a big bunch of Egyptian pounds and asked me to keep them for him. After that we said: 'So long,' and 'Good luck.' 'I've got to hurry. I'll be late,' Ralph said. Then he pushed open the swinging doors, waved his hand, and stepped out into the blackout. It was a clear night with plenty of stars. Around Athens it looked like a good night for flying. But I went upstairs knowing it was not a good night. 'Why does he have to do it?' I asked myself again and again. But I knew the answer. Anybody who had ever really known Ralph Barnes knew the answer.

I slept very little that night. When I came restlessly out of each doze I kept thinking about the flight. Where would the bombers be now? Supposing those hellish mountain peaks are buried in clouds or smudged with rain or snow? I wonder if Ralph can keep his legs warm in that cramped passage where he has to lie? It must be nearly four o'clock now. Maybe they're on the way back. Why didn't you go out to the field

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to wait for him? . . . But you'd have gone nuts hanging around there all night. Remember the time you went out with Tommy, and four planes never came back, and that unbearable feeling of waiting and waiting and still they didn't come. That was a daylight raid, too. At night it would be lots worse. Supposing every plane got back except Ralph's, and Tommy and all the gang were all trying to make believe they weren't worried as hell. . . . Well, why in the devil are you acting so damned morose, Stowe? Go to sleep. They're on the way back and they'll be in soon after daybreak.

Below my window the first street noises clinked and clattered around the plaza. The dawn came clear and bright, like most November dawns in Athens this autumn. After six-thirty I had a steady fight with myself, for it seemed I must go down to Ralph's room on the second floor and see if he had returned. Yet I knew it was too early. Allowing as much as six hours for the round-trip flight, he could scarcely get back before eight o'clock, and maybe not until nine. But maybe they went to Valona. If they did he might get back in five hours. Finally I felt I couldn't possibly remain upstairs any longer. It was a few minutes before eight. From the fourth floor I went down to the second and around to the end of the rear corridor. The corridor stopped at Ralph's room and I knew the door would be open because he never locked it. I stood with my hand on the door knob, possessed by a deep dread. The fear which I had striven, ever since the previous noon, to smother inside me was suddenly very great now. Suddenly I did not want, I was afraid to open the door. At that moment I knew the answer, but my heart kept saying fiercely: 'No, no! Don't be a fool! You've got to believe. Even if he isn't here now, you've got to believe!' At last, with a great effort of will, I turned the knob very softly. If he should be back already, I must not wake him up. I pushed the door open a few inches. The bed was empty, with the upper sheet folded open and Ralph's pyjamas spread out there just as the maid had prepared things the night before.

I closed the door and hurried back up the corridor to Martin Agronsky's room. I had to talk with somebody—

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somebody who might find some reason for hope. Martin was just pulling up his Venetian blinds. 'Ralph isn't back yet,' I said. Martin gave a slight start. I knew he had the same feeling I did.

'What time is it? Eight o'clock? Well, we got back earlier than that yesterday, but it's still pretty early. I don't think that's anything to worry about, Lee. Probably he'll be in in another hour. I'll try to get hold of Jan a little later. Don't worry. I think they'll get in all right.'

'But I don't feel right about this. I haven't from the beginning.'

'Yes, I know how you feel. But it's too early. We can tell better after nine o'clock. Probably everything will be all right. Ralph and Jan will probably both be in after nine o'clock.'

Now I wanted the minutes to pass with mad speed, yet I was afraid to have them do so. I had never felt this way before. Something had happened to Ralph's plane. I knew something had happened to his plane. When at last I returned and opened the door of his room again, I knew the bed would be waiting as it had been before. I could tell from Martin's face that he had been there, too. 'It looks bad,' he said. 'Jan got in half an hour ago. But he was on the shorter flight to Valona. Ralph wanted the tougher hop, so he went to Durazzo. But he may be stuck out at the field. You know, they're sometimes short of cars out there. He might have to hang around before he could get back to town.' We phoned Tommy at R.A.F. headquarters, but Tommy had no word yet. Within an hour he did have word. Ralph's plane was missing. 'They may have been forced down,' Tommy said. I had heard that kind of synthetic optimism before. I knew Tommy was saying what he wanted to believe. God, how I wanted to believe it, too! But I couldn't. Steve felt the same way. 'I knew he never should have gone,' Steve said.

'What could we do?'

'But, God damn it, it's such a criminal waste. Of all the correspondents in this war, why would a thing like that have to happen to Ralph Barnes?'

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'Maybe there's still one chance in a thousand, Steve. I wish to God I could believe it.'

The R.A.F. bent every effort all day. Every airfield in Greece was notified and every Greek army headquarters. That was Monday, 18 November. The next morning Tommy Wisdom gave me the news. The missing British bomber had crashed somewhere in the mountains of southern Yugoslavia, far off its course. They had run into terrific gales, rain, and fog. Two of the bombers which returned from Durazzo had barely got over the mountains. Ralph's plane must have got lost in the storm. It happened that the pilot with whom he flew had been forced to turn back by bad weather on his last previous flight. Naturally, he would fight through hell and brimstone to get through to his target this time. The plane had crashed somewhere in Yugoslavia. They did not yet know at headquarters whether there were any survivors, but if they had been unable to unload all their bombs—? Tommy was tight-lipped. 'There's just a long chance,' he said. He saw what was in our eyes.

I went into Ralph's room alone. The pyjamas still lay upon his bed with his slippers just below them. His army belt with its fine, dark, polished leather lay in the chair. His typewriter was open on his desk, surrounded by a litter of copy paper and among it several sheets with experimental leads written for his last story, about the Acropolis. Half a dozen Greek and Mediterranean maps also lay in the chair. The stand by the bed was piled with books. I took out my notebook. It required a forced effort, but these were some of the things which Esther, Ralph's wife, and the girls would want to know. *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*—Ralph had spoken to me about it with great enthusiasm several times. He had been reading and rereading it ever since he went to Syria and Palestine last August. H. A. L. Fisher's *A History of Europe*—Ralph had carted that book from one end of Europe to another. To him it was virtually a Bible for foreign correspondents. Here was the third volume of Rollin's *Histoire ancienne* and another *La Grèce actuelle*—Ralph had collected these in Athens. Then Moulton's *Descriptive Astronomy* and *The Mysterious Universe* by

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Sir James Jeans. The room was too silent and there was much too much in it. I could not stay there any longer. I took *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* up to my room, but I did not open it then.

We spent that Tuesday going through the motions of our work and battling inwardly, torn by the dread uncertainty which was virtually a certainty. We were all suddenly aware of the tremendous gap which Ralph's absence left in our midst. You could see that, too, in the faces and the words of the R.A.F. officers and the British censors. I doubt if any of them had known a newspaperman during the war who had commanded so much of their respect and affection. The Valona raid had come through all right, but Ralph had insisted he wanted to go to Durazzo because it would be a harder flight. Someone said he had changed planes at the last moment in order to go over Durazzo, and had hopped into the particular bomber which was flown by the pilot who had been forced to turn back the night before. I couldn't find out for certain about this. Anyway it was clear that Durazzo had been Ralph's choice. 'It was just in the cards, Lee,' Martin Agronsky said gloomily. 'Any way you look at it, drawing lots and everything—it was just in the cards.'

Nothing was official yet. In Athens we still did not know the name of the mountain where the plane had crashed, and there was still no word that bodies had been identified. Tommy said there might possibly have been one survivor, but he didn't say it with any conviction. Until the R.A.F. received a final report there was nothing we could do. I couldn't send a telegram to Oregon. I could do nothing except wait, thinking of Ralph and of Esther and their two girls, who were each just a shade younger than Bruce and Alan.

In our group of correspondents conversation always came back to the missing plane and no one succeeded in breaking the gloom for very long. Sometimes one of the fellows told about some typical stunt that Ralph had pulled in Libya or elsewhere. I remembered Tommy's story of the way Ralph had wangled things so as to take the first bombing trip that

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any correspondent had taken with the R.A.F. in the Near East. That had really been the opening wedge for this other flight. You couldn't get around Martin's words—'in the cards'. Later, in Cairo, Ed Kennedy told me about another incident which was also part of the picture. Ralph, Ed, and several other correspondents were talking one night about the chances of going on a bombing flight. One of the reporters said he didn't see any sense in going on a raid; you could get just as good a story by interviewing the R.A.F. crews when they came back. 'No,' Ralph objected. 'I don't think you could get as good a story as by going along with them.' Then he added: 'I've got a wife and children. Maybe I shouldn't take a risk like that. But just the same, as a reporter that's how I feel about it.' 'I remember exactly how he said it,' Ed continued; 'not as good a story as going along with them.'

During those twenty-four hours of 19 November I remembered a great many things which went back over the years, all the way to that spring day in 1926 when Ralph, then a cub reporter on the *Brooklyn Eagle*, had walked into the *Herald Tribune* city room and astonished the city editor with a proposal such as he had never heard in his life before. He had procured a job on the *Paris Herald*, but he would like to be allowed to work without salary on the *Herald Tribune's* city staff over the three-week period before his boat sailed because he felt he ought to have some knowledge of the parent newspaper as preparation for work on its Paris edition. At the end of the three weeks young Barnes received an unheard-of offer of an increase of ten dollars a week if he would remain in New York. Instead of accepting a comfortable forty-five dollars a week Ralph went to Paris to support himself and his wife on approximately eighteen dollars a week. I remembered how the four of us had explored Paris and its restaurants together; and how, a year later, Ralph had been the first newspaperman to discover Lindbergh following his disappearance on the night of his arrival at Le Bourget field . . . how Ralph had chased from one end of Paris to the other and finally located Lindbergh at the American Embassy, and how he came tearing into our office with a marvellous interview

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which got a big spread on our New York edition's front page, but bore the signature of the man who was then chief of the Paris bureau. I remembered countless things which belonged to the Barnes legend and made it crystal clear why there had never been another foreign correspondent quite like him. But in those hours I remembered especially how often he had talked with me about his family during these few days in Athens; and the delight with which he pounced upon a picture of Joan with our two boys, a picture Rida had sent me recently. 'Hasn't my daughter become a fine-looking young lady?' he exclaimed. 'Golly Moses, how Joannie is growing up!' He wondered if there happened to be a snapshot of Suzanne and Esther. It took so long to get letters, he said. I thought about those things and the cable I couldn't send yet but would have to send. Unless the miracle which couldn't happen somehow happened. The next morning there was no longer any doubt. We were called to Tommy Wisdom's office to get the communiqué:

'The Air Officer Commanding the British Air Forces in Greece announces with regret that Mr. Ralph W. Barnes of the *New York Herald Tribune* has been killed in action while carrying out his duties as war correspondent in an R.A.F. bomber aircraft. Mr. Barnes was a passenger in an R.A.F. bomber which crashed near the Yugoslav-Albanian border, the entire crew of the aircraft being killed.'

There was also a tribute from an R.A.F. officer, saying a few of the most important things which we all knew to be true. It ended with the statement: 'He was a brave man and every R.A.F. pilot who knew him will miss his comradeship.'

We learned then that the plane had crashed near Danilovgrad in old Montenegro, just north of the Albanian border. It had circled in rain and fog, dropping flares in a desperate effort to find a landing place. The roar of the motors had awakened Serbian peasants. After daybreak they found the wreckage. The plane had crashed just about fifteen feet below the top of the highest peak in the vicinity. If it had been fifty or sixty yards to either side it would have missed the peak.



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In the winter of 1930, while Ralph was my assistant, I concluded a fortunately unpublished attempt to write an autobiographical novel. The story ended with the main character (patterned out of my own background) discovering the first phase of an Italian invasion of Yugoslavia, supposedly occurring in the year 1939. The foreign correspondent of my manuscript died of pneumonia in the mountains of northern Albania. It seemed bitterly ironical now that the man who had been a brother to me had lost his life in these same mountains at the outset of Italy's invasion of Greece.

I went back to my room with the R.A.F. communiqué, knowing that the story must be written and that somehow, in so far as it lay within my will-power and capacities, it must be worthy. Over nineteen long years of newspaper work it was the most difficult dispatch I was ever compelled to write. After all, it was not enough to say that Ralph Barnes was irreplaceable among all American correspondents anywhere in the world. It was true that he had been one of the few truly great reporters I had ever known. But what are words? And how many would ever guess the ceaseless effort and burning energy and magnificent integrity which had gone into his dispatches year after year? Who would know, save those who had known him or gone with him along the high road which had always been his? After all, he was one of the great spirits—and they are all too few.

Down in Ralph's room I sorted out his papers. Among them was a picture, taken just below the entrance on the day he had 'crashed' the Acropolis. He was standing in his army greatcoat, and his triumphant smile seemed to say: 'Listen. You'll never guess where I've been! *I've been on the Acropolis!*' There was also Ralph's notebook, a new one which he had bought in Cairo or Alexandria for the war in Greece. On its first page he had scratched down six ideas for stories, to be worked up as soon as he reached Athens. Below these was a seventh item—'something to do, so won't be marking time'. That was Ralph, who had never marked time in his life.

I picked up Ralph's army belt, wanting to wear it after I

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became accredited, until I could take it home for Esther. Then I went back upstairs again. From my window the Acropolis loomed so high above the city roofs that it seemed very close and the tawny-brown pillars of the Parthenon stood serenely against the sky, a fragment of immortality which by some God-given chance the hands of ancient man had touched and shaped and dedicated to all the dead and all the living and all those mortals yet unborn. At this moment the Parthenon had a new and greater grandeur than it had ever had before. But it was safer not to look at it too long. It would always be there. You understood now that it would always be there.

Ralph's copy of *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* lay on my desk. My dispatch had been dictated over the telephone to Bern now. On an impulse I picked up the book. It was almost twilight and I stood by the doorway to my balcony. The pages fell open automatically to where a folded piece of copy paper lay. I picked up the paper and my eyes were caught by a brief passage, in the final paragraph of a chapter, which had been underlined by Ralph. I read the words of Lawrence of Arabia; and then I stood still for a long time, staring at the page to which the book had opened and reading the words again. The words might have been spoken. For me they were.

*'Not a long death—even for the very strongest a second day in summer was all.'*

## *Chapter 12*

### FRONT TRIP IN ALBANIA

*14 December*

**T**his time we were stuck in the mud before we were four hours out of Athens. We had gambled on the Patras route, then across to Mesolonghion by ferry—if the sea wasn't too rough—and up to Jannina and on to Argyrocastro and the front.

Whichever way you went there'd be plenty of trouble. But neither Steve nor I had any stomach for trying the Delphi-Lidoriki road on the northern side of the Gulf of Corinth again. Only ten days ago we had corkscrewed up and corkscrewed down those diabolical mountains, hour after hour and all night long. No stars. Black pits below us and a black blanket above. Hundreds of hairpin turns, up or down. Wondering all the time when you'd find a curve by having it drop completely out from under you. Kingdom Come at every corner, and Steve fighting to keep awake at the wheel.

No, thanks. We'd take a chance on the ferry still running from Patras, which normally is only a five-hour drive from Athens. This time it took us twelve. After four hours we suddenly met three feet of mountain torrent face to face. A big chunk of the valley dike had been washed out. The river was plunging straight across the road, according to the oldest Greek traditions, and an R.A.F. truck was trapped in the middle of it. The waters were too high. We couldn't drive through—and this was the only road to Patras.

The villagers insisted we'd have to go back. But that would mean back-tracking all the way to Athens, then taking the Delphi nightmare anyhow and losing at least one whole day.

## FRONT TRIP IN ALBANIA

We said there must be some way to get round this flood. A dozen Greeks said it was impossible. Finally one admitted a donkey trail crawled behind the currant vineyards, along the foot of the Peloponnesian range. It was soaked with rain, rimmed with three-foot ditches on the low side, and rarely wider than the wheels of our car.

Woeful George, our chauffeur, managed to cover about a hundred yards. Then the rear right wheel slid clear into the ditch bogging the machine on its axle. Greek peasants crowded around, telling us how impossible it was, but at last they produced two heavy poles. A dozen of us pried and lifted for twenty minutes. We got the car back on the donkey trail, went ahead forty yards, and were off in the ditch again.

That happened ten times over the next three hundred yards, but the Greeks had their fighting spirit up now. Even the half-grown youngsters tugged and pushed and we all slopped around in inches of yellow slimy mud. For three and a half hours we battled, but it was no use. Whenever George started the motor the rear wheel, without treads and sometimes with only a two-inch margin, always slid into the ditch again.

But we had supplied ourselves in advance with a thick towing rope for just such an emergency. Maybe the car could be controlled better by towing it. Twenty Greeks grabbed the tow rope and a dozen more kept the car out of the ditch with their arms and shoulders. They pulled us triumphantly over the last quarter-mile. Then everybody yelled: '*Zhito, Hellas!* (Long live Greece!),' we all had a drink of resined wine, and soon we were back on the main road again. After that we had two more rock-strewn river-beds to cross in the darkness. In each place freshets had washed out all signs of the road for several hundred yards. George and I waded around to find the shallowest places and Steve rammed the car through one stretch of rushing water and then another. So we reached Patras, in spite of George's dire prophecies, about nine that night, and a gendarme told us the ferry was leaving at eight in the morning. The hotel was fine; the last heated hotel we found until we got back to Athens.

## FRONT TRIP IN ALBANIA

*15 December*

Woeful George had always driven for tourists and he didn't get the idea. When we learned that to-day's ferry was too small to accommodate a car, he thought we could wait twenty-four hours for another one. We welcomed the chance to pay George off and left him looking sadder than ever. It was two hours across the bay to Kryoneri and forty minutes more by a dinky railroad up to Mesolonghion, where we had to start a 350-mile hitch-hike up to the Albanian front.

There are two kinds of Greeks. About ninety-five per cent of them seem to belong to the category which believes in solving every problem by long and animated debate. The remaining small but select minority spend their respective lifetimes turning deaf ears to oral discussion while energetically slashing red tape in all directions. Steve says these are really the Greeks who can yell the loudest. Anyway they have the magnificent gift of knowing their own minds and imposing swift solutions—the men who have done most to make a monkey out of Mussolini.

The station master at Mesolonghion is such a man. We were lucky enough to step right off the train into his domain. Of course, like every Greek, he began by inviting us to have a cup of coffee in his office. (I doubt very much whether Greek mobilization was ordered until General Metaxas or most of the general staff had had a cup of coffee.) In any case, coffee for strangers or friends is a sacred ritual of hospitality in Greece. In one breath the station master ordered our coffee, in the next he flew into action. Within twelve minutes he (1) telephoned the local gendarmerie to say that some kind of automobile must be found and rushed to the station for two American correspondents; (2) ordered the train to delay its departure for Agrinion, in case a car could not be located; (3) telephoned Agrinion, which is half-way to Jannina in the north, to learn that no reliable conveyance could be procured for us there; (4) ordered cognac so we could all drink to the victory of Greece; (5) reported that a good car with a good driver had arrived and would take us all the way to

## FRONT TRIP IN ALBANIA

Jannina; (6) ordered the Agrinion train to continue its journey; (7) bundled our supplies, knapsacks, and typewriters into the car and sent us speeding out of Mesolonghion singing praises of that small élite in this speech-loving land, whose members are the sparkplugs of the Greek people.

We drove up through the first wild gorge and on to Amphylchia and a late lunch. Captain Carr, one of our favourite Greeks from America, was still there. He was most disappointed that we couldn't stay for dinner at his home. He would kill a young lamb and show us a real Greek meal. Why should anyone forgo a little hospitality on account of a war? He told wonderful tales about Ali Pasha, the notorious Albanian tyrant of Napoleon's day, but we always had to fight against being caught on these mountain roads at night—even though we almost always did get caught on them. So we drove on: on past the Gulf of Arta, where Cleopatra and Antony once whiled away week after week with their hundreds of galleys which Augustus had bottled up in its narrow-necked bay. Now the mountains on its southern flank are heavy with snow. We are riding straight into winter, regardless of the orange-clustered groves which still lie ahead at Arta.

Our new chauffeur wears a collarless shirt and frayed old clothes, but he definitely belongs to the 'sparkplug' aristocracy of Greece. He's the complete antithesis of Woeful George. He must be over fifty, but he drives as the Greeks fight, as if no obstacles can be recognized. I begin calling him 'Dynamo' and he grins appreciatively. Apparently it's one of those words handed down from ancient Greek, like *arithmus* for 'number' and *strategos* for 'general'. Steve likes *mysticos* best of all—a *mysticos*, quite naturally, being a detective.

Anyway, we have our second flat tyre at Arta and Dynamo again changes tyres like a speed-demon possessed. We've only forty-five miles more to go, but it's getting dark now and a misty rain is closing down. We still have the nastiest mountain range to climb before we can coast down into Jannina. Soon rain and night wipe everything out around us and then, higher up, the rain changes to snow—and right there is

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where we catch up with the motor-lorry supply trains and scores of horse-drawn carts. The road serpentine badly here and on most of the curves solid earth drops away, ten, fifty, or one hundred feet. It's plain outright hell to ride over this road at night, but we're caught again.

The snowflakes are big, thick, and fast. At first it's impossible to see more than four feet in front of our car. Then the windshield is covered half an inch thick. Dynamo drives with his right hand and keeps a little spot wiped clean outside with his left hand. Then he drives with his head hanging out on the side and we slide past convoy carts and neither Steve nor I can see where the outside edge of the road is. We know it's damnably close. Sometimes the headlights reveal a black hole—a curving white line with an endless black border on it—just six or eight inches to the right of our front wheel. We know what that means. I hold my breath, expecting the earth to fall away from us at any moment. Then come more curves and more convoys and more whirling snow and more black pits.

It's the same ghastly business that's hounded us wherever we've gone in Greece or Albania. There are no walls on the edge of these curves—only a sheer drop—and usually the trucks come round the curves on your side of the road. In this driving snowstorm it's a miracle that Dynamo can feel where the road turns. We go on like this for several thousand years. My nerves have been shot to pieces by half a dozen accidents and dozens of hairbreadth escapes during the past six weeks. I'd rather face a series of good, open-eyed, hit-me-or-miss-me bombings. I sit on the edge of my seat and try to keep my tongue from yelling: 'Here's another! Look out!'

We crawl along the thin edge of eternity for about thirty minutes, ordinary time. Then the car suddenly pokes its nose out of the snow and in two seconds we are back on an absolutely dry road-bed again. Clear sailing and on over the hump and down into Jannina. There are no rooms in our old hotel. The Britannia is as unheated as a cowshed. It looks like rough going from here on. Even so, we've been lucky to cover 350 miles in two days.

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*16 December*

No cars of any kind that can be hired, or borrowed from the authorities, and Dynamo can't go any farther. After three hours of effort Steve and I locate a Red Cross ambulance which is taking a load of bread back to a hospital near Argyro-castro (Greek for Silver Castle). The Greek soldiers and drivers always treat Anglo-Saxons like nobility, and these drivers pack in our luggage as if we'd been generals. Steve's legs are long, so I sit on the hard round loaves of bread behind the driver's seat.

We know most of the road up to Kakavia on the Albanian frontier. It's through valleys most of the way and there are dozens of dead horses along the road. Some of them have been pushed into the ditches. Some still lie where they fell. Trucks, in their mad dash for the front, have flattened out the heads of some of them. Others have had their haunches torn or crushed by collisions from the rear. Still others died from exhaustion. There are always more dead horses. Dumb in life, they speak with a bitter eloquence in death. You look at them and know you are in the war zone once more. You look at them and hasten to look away. But they make you think about war. You ride on and there are more dead horses and you keep thinking about war. We don't like it, but they are always there—and so is the war.

Beyond Kakavia our ambulance strikes the fine military road which the Italians built, all the way down to the frontier. Now we are in the valley of the Drina River. We roll up the winding valley with snowbound mountain ranges high above us on either side. Somewhere, miles ahead at the top of this valley, lies Tepeleni Pass and the front. On our left we go by tile-roofed Albanian villages, dug in and terraced on the sharp hillsides. It is nearly dusk when we round one more bend in the road. Steve exclaims and points up the mountainside.

Hundreds of houses cover the rib-like hills above us. Houses and tile roofs are grey and drab, but they rise tier upon tier; and above them all, upon a mighty bluff, stand the



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ruins of an old Venetian fortress. It is Argyrocastro, taken last week from the Italians, and more an eagle's nest than a silver castle.

A long climb up to the pinched little square, from which narrow cobbled streets run haphazardly up and across the hillside. Someone leads us to an unpromising doorway and says this is the hotel. Inside are bare walls, a long bare corridor, a desk which actually resembles slightly a hotel registration desk—and behind it a huge empty bathtub, two big wine barrels, and a flight of stairs. The restaurant is on the third floor. It has no glass in its door, the stairway windows are wide open. An Arctic gale blows through the room while we eat. The hotel has no heating in it anyway. We sleep in our woollen underwear, socks, and sweaters and I go to bed with my knitted scarf around my neck (Steve also wore his pants). With three blankets apiece we lay awake and shivered half the night.

*17 December*

Three days of steady battling to cover about 420 miles from Athens to Argyrocastro. Now we are within twenty miles of the central Albanian front. Dan DeLuce of the A.P. and Russell Hill of the *New York Herald Tribune* also arrived last night, not hitch-hiking, but in their own car. We rode up with them toward Tepeleni early this morning, then we got separated for a while. Dan and Russ stopped near some Greek 85's and 105's which were just beginning to belch and bellow. A deafening WHAM, an angry hiss, and then a long arching, fading Zzzzzzzzzzz—far over the hills ahead. Finally the loudest and maddest echoes I've ever heard, bouncing across the Drina Valley from the frozen mountains on one side to the Alp-like peaks on the other. The Greeks were pouring it on to the Italian artillery positions on the heights behind Tepeleni.

Tepeleni is the gateway to Valona, and Valona is the key to all the rest of Albania. If the Greeks take Tepeleni, they'll have the highest mountain range and Valona will be theirs in a few weeks. Then the Fascist forces in Durazzo, Elbasan,

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and Tirana would be doomed. Steve and I want to get into Tepeleni, or as near to Tepeleni as we can. So we go ahead on foot, bump into a Greek major, and he offers to escort us.

Rounding a big bend we are within five miles of Tepeleni and still sticking to the road when three Italian shells crash down beside the river-bank to our right. 'They'll be coming here next. Better run!' shouts Major Chapralis. As we dash across the field toward a pile of boulders, more shells come screaming at us. They come in crescendo, like an aerial express train speeded up several thousand times. We throw ourselves at the foot of the boulders, alongside several dozens of crouching Greek soldiers, just as Numbers 4 and 5 send geysers of earth and smoke shooting skyward behind us. Even so Steve has been crazy enough to step out there in the open and snap a picture of our shelter. I am standing up, too, but we both learn better very soon.

The major advises a safer place up ahead, but we'll have to run for it. This time we move fast enough, with the explosions getting thicker behind us. We are puffing as we enter a wooded grove where hundreds of horses from a machine-gun cavalry regiment are tethered. Beyond, a mountain brook carves a deep ravine around the bottom of a steep hill. Several hundred soldiers are taking refuge here from the Fascist barrage. We report to the colonel, whose tent is pitched close against the heel of the hill. The colonel has a face as sensitive as an artist's and sad eyes which light up swiftly when he speaks. He fought in the Balkan wars of 1912-13, then through the World War, then against the Turks in Asia Minor. He is only forty-six and this is his fourth war. It seems strange that the whole essence of the man is spiritual. Before the day is over I have time to ponder over that again and again.

'The Italian spotters saw you when you came up the road,' Colonel Kassandris says. 'From your uniforms they thought you were British officers. That's why they're sending over so many shells. You're pretty well advanced, you know. No other correspondents have been up here. But I'm afraid you'll have to stay here now until it gets dark. You'll only draw their fire if you try to go back during daylight.'

## FRONT TRIP IN ALBANIA

That means eight hours to go. The colonel and the major explain the positions. The Greeks have cleared the snow-bound heights on our left. Across the river, on our right as we face Tepeleni, the great Nemeroka range towers above the valley for many miles. Now the Greeks hold its crest up to 1,600 metres, a place diagonally across from us. But the Italians are still entrenched on its westernmost peak, Mount Lekle, which is 1,730 metres high. They hold Lekle village just below the snowline, and this other village of Hormova which is straight across from us. Their artillery observation post is somewhere along there.

While we talk the shells keep coming and they scream over our hill—much too loud to be pleasant and each one as if it were marked for us. I am thinking: 'Well, you're back under artillery fire. The first time you were under it, it was Russian artillery. Just a year—yes, a year and two days ago—with Webb Miller at Taipele on the Karelian isthmus. From Taipele, Finland, to Tepeleni, Albania—' WHAM goes a smacker, right on the top of our little hill. We hug the hillside as dirt and gravel shower down.

They are whistling over fast now. One swelling scream after another. That makes four. We have our backs to the hill, and the colonel, always pointing toward the river and to our left, clocks them off as they come over. 'Still over there. . . . Again over there. . . . That's six. We used to have one of our batteries down there. . . . Still over there.' The colonel's ears are marvellously accurate. He doesn't duck like the rest of us when it seems the shells are coming straight at us. His voice, naturally soft, never loses its conversational quality. But he sees to it that his men keep shelter. They have strict orders not to venture away from the protective banks of our little gully.

All this time, and all day, the Greek batteries much farther to our rear are talking back and talking big. When their shells arch over, whirring out and away from us, their singing sounds reassuring. Seated in the brush on the back slope of our hill or crouched in crevices of rocks and in nooks down beside the brook, the Greek soldiers jest with one another. They are

## FRONT TRIP IN ALBANIA

calm and full of smiles. Wherever we go these little mountain-eating Greeks are as light-hearted as children, but as tough as the multitudinous rocks of their native land.

The colonel is telling how their men, plunging through four and five feet of snow, drove the Fascists from that mountain top up there yesterday. 'They suffer a great deal. It is hard to get food to them. In the deep snow it is still worse for the donkeys. It is terribly cold at night and there is no shelter for the men. But they keep on.' We have shivered half the night in the hotel at Argyrocastro, but it is 1,200 feet higher up there, and there are no walls to keep out the mountain gales, and no snug tents with wonderfully warm little stoves such as the Finns had. . . . I am thinking that even war correspondents never learn much about the real hardships of war. We can't go up there. It would take too many days. We haven't the time. If we had the time, could we stand it? Could we stand it for long on a hunk of hard bread and a dried fig for a day's rations and stamping back and forth all night long in the snow to keep our feet from freezing, not daring to sleep for forty-eight hours or more at a stretch? What does the outside world know about this war, since we—who are here—know so little about it?

With difficulty we persuade the colonel and the major to share some of the sliced ham and Roquefort cheese and wine from our knapsacks. They have tasted no such delicacies for weeks, yet they are concerned lest we—a couple of privileged newspapermen—be reduced to a Greek soldier's diet. We will not eat unless they do, so they eat and it is good to see their enjoyment. We are used to the shells now and don't pay much attention. But we only have a couple of hundred yards of safety zone in which to move around and the day is long. I stretch out in the tent and scratch out a lead to the dispatch I'll write when we get back.

In the afternoon Dan and Russ pop down into our ravine. They'd been caught behind the boulders in the open field for nearly two hours, with shells sometimes bursting only fifty or sixty yards beyond them. Rather a hot initiation for a first time under an artillery barrage. After a while we creep down

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to the foot of our ravine where a shell-burst killed about twenty-five horses over an hour ago. They are a pitiful sight. Here is one lying dead at the end of its tether while five others, tied to the same tree, are standing unharmed, munching straw. One horse we can scarcely bear to look at. It stands on swaying feet, the lower half of its face hanging in shreds of red flesh—nothing else—and its breath rattles from its throat in horrible gasps. We have no revolvers and there is no one around to shoot it. For the only time in this war I wish I carried a gun. Why is it that the suffering of dumb animals somehow seems even worse than the agony of human beings? Because we think of them as helpless, I suppose. Yet women and children in air raids are just as helpless. Steve takes the picture and we go away from this place.

In the late afternoon the Italians begin to let go with everything they have. Dan, Russ, Steve, and I have been standing talking for some time when I suddenly take a notion to look inside the tent. A moment later I hear Steve yell. He is picking up a long, jagged piece of shrapnel. It is still hot as I take hold of it. Steve heard something whizzing down and jerked backward. The shrapnel fell at his feet. It would have struck him, or it might have struck me if I hadn't had that inexplicable impulse to go to the tent, for nothing at all.

They have pounded the lower side of our little hill. Now they are pounding it on top. And now, as dusk falls, they are smacking the upper corner of our hill at the rate of a dozen bursts in swift succession. The former crystal waters of our brook are running murky brown from the explosions just above. With the darkness the barrage dies away gradually. In nine hours the Fascists have sent over two hundred shells or more, but we find the Greek batteries completely untouched on our way back.

The colonel's headquarters are in a little farmhouse well behind the lines and there's a fire in the fireplace. Hot tea and a real fire are wonderful things. Aided by a gas-pump lamp the colonel works at his reports and checks up on other parts of the front by phone. The Italians have been driven out of Hormova village, he says. Now the Greek infantry is within

## FRONT TRIP IN ALBANIA

three miles of Tepeleni. Will they take it in the next two or three days? Our hopes are high. Back in our icebox at Argyrocastro we drink a big bottle of Chianti, trying to keep warm through our meal. Steve and I ought to write our stories tonight. But your fingers get so numb you can hardly type, and with nothing but candlelight it's an awful strain on the eyes. Dan and Russ won't leave for Jannina until to-morrow noon, so we decide to get up early in the morning and have our dispatches ready for them to take at noon.

*18 December*

It's so bitter cold in our rooms that Steve and I asked Colonel Dracopoulou, chief of the Greek gendarmerie, if we could work in the prefecture. The colonel, who has a sister living in Chicago, kindly gave us a room with a stove in it; but even then we had to stop and warm our fingers every twenty minutes or so. Dan and Russ left with their dispatches and ours right after lunch. Steve went out to get some pictures of this picturesque place. I brought my typewriter into the dining-room, thinking I'd write another story to send whenever there's a chance. Until now, a quiet day and as peaceful as this bright winter sunshine.

I write a dozen lines, keep lighting my pipe and scratching my head, but the thing won't jell. I am half-way through another sentence. I get stuck and have just found the rest of the phrase. Then hell breaks upon us. The hotel rocks from two terrific explosions. The window-panes fly into bits all around us. I am lying on the floor, trembling, flinching, gritting my teeth. Everyone in the room is on the floor. So are overturned tables and chairs. I find myself under my table. I hate myself for it, but I am scared. I feel like a rat. I keep saying to myself: 'The next one will get you—or it won't.' Then I say: 'Get downstairs. Get down in the cellar.'

I dash to the stairway and plunge down through clouds of smelly smoke. The other side of the hotel has been blown wide open. A man with his head covered with blood staggers in from the street. A boy is weeping wildly. A Greek reserve officer and I try to comfort him, but it's no use. I can hear no

## FRONT TRIP IN ALBANIA

more bombs. I step outside. At the corner of the hotel, forty feet away, a horse is writhing, its entrails strewn on the cobblestones. Around the corner, in the narrow alley where two bombs fell, lies a mashed shape without legs, arms, or head. Part of a man's coat can still be recognized.

Where is Steve? First I think of hunting, but these hillside alleys are an endless labyrinth. If I get higher up, up on the steep slopes beneath the castle bluff, I can see everything. If he's okay he'll be taking pictures, or maybe he'll be climbing up too. It's a stiff climb. At last, when I'm directly under the cliff, I can look down. All the hits are in a circle around the hotel. Just below it smoke is pouring up from the ruins of two houses. There's a crater in the middle of the square—and there's Steve. Taking pictures, sure enough.

Steve's all right. I yell and yell, but the terrified wails of Albanian women and children completely drown my voice. These people had no warning. They had never been bombed. The planes came straight over the mountains and were on the town in less than a minute. The cries of the women and children are worse than anything I've ever heard. Scores of boys and girls are running panic-stricken through the streets, screaming for their mothers. Steve can't possibly hear me. He's a fool to stay down there any longer. I go down to join him and bring him up. I have a feeling the Fascists will be back again.

We look around at the wreckage first and Steve tells me what happened to him. 'I saw the planes and I pointed my camera at them to take a picture. Just then a bomb landed—in the same street—maybe forty feet away. I was blown through a shop door—right through the door. I came in with the glass—landed right on top of some other people. It's a wonder my camera wasn't smashed. When I picked myself up I looked at the camera. The leather flap was pulled over the lens. I don't remember doing it. My God, it was close! I'm telling you, I was blown clear through the door!'

Later we were up under the projecting ledge of the cliff. But while we were still in the square the bombers came back. No time to climb the steep hill. A crowd of people were fight-

## FRONT TRIP IN ALBANIA

ing their way down the stairs into the hotel cellar. We were among the last, but the gendarmes pushed us down and inside. At that moment came the roar and the rocking earth. It seemed as if the building above us would collapse. When we came out one bomb had landed exactly where the dying horse had been lying, across from the corner of the hotel. It had smashed three shops to smithereens.

We watched the third raid of the afternoon from the little niche under the cliff. This time the bombs fell wide, but fifteen people or more had been killed and about forty wounded. By London standards perhaps it was not such a bad bombing, but these people had been murdered without warning as they walked the streets after lunch; and there were no deep shelters in the town. The tile-roofed, two-storey mountain houses did not even have cellars worthy of the name. For the first time the Fascists had turned their wrath loose upon an Albanian town.

This hotel, with its bathtub in the entrance hall, wasn't much to cheer over before the bombing. Now it's a proper mess. No hope of a hot meal. Together with the gendarme's chief and a few officials we dined, in our overcoats, on some leftovers from lunch. Somebody swears Tepeleni was captured at five this morning. Somebody else says it's already been announced on the Athens radio. Colonel Dracopoulou can't say for certain, but admits his picked squad of gendarmes—those who take over administration of occupied towns—will leave by motorcycle at daybreak to-morrow. He promises us places in a sidecar, saying we can ride in with the gendarmes. First newsmen into Tepeleni—that's what we want.

Before turning in, Steve and I wrote our stories of to-day's bombings. Our feet and hands almost froze in the process, and we had to do it by candlelight. We shook the glass off our bedcovers and swept the splinters under the beds. With the windows gone, lots of air is circulating. Too damned much. Don't know whether it's worse to go to bed with your teeth chattering or to wake up that way. Only two or three others have remained in this refrigerator.



## FRONT TRIP IN ALBANIA

*19 December*

Up at half-past five. Near-Arctic water to wash in. No food to be had here, not even a cup of coffee or tea, the café down the street also having been blasted out of business. We have an orange and some figs from our supplies. The gendarme motor cyclists aren't ready to start until seven. Some have ledgers and record books stuffed in their sidecars. It looks as though we're going right into Tepeleni. Riding in a sidecar up the valley, you feel the wind bite clear through you, but Steve and I are in high spirits. It looks as though we're going to get through at last.

We chug along merrily. Then they stop us at the bend in the road, the same bend that Steve and I walked round into the Italian artillery fire two days ago. An officer tells the gendarmes they'll have to turn around and wait. Tepeleni hasn't been taken yet. The Italians are still dug in, with concrete fortifications on the mountain behind the town. We decide to stay up there and see what we can see. That's how we spent another day by the Drina River, with Italian shells slamming along the valley, trying to find the Greek batteries, and with Fascist planes coming over in threes and fives every twenty minutes or half-hour.

We met Colonel Kassandris, who told us he had to pull his cavalry out of the ravine. The day after we were there about a dozen men had been killed or wounded by a shell. It had burst right at the heel of the hill, where we had spent the day and where the major had insisted shells couldn't come. Now we had both artillery fire and bombers overhead, but so far the shells were hitting far across the plain, along the foot of the mountain, and half a mile beyond us. Probably they'd stay over there, since the Italians rarely bothered to correct their fire.

But the planes get bothersome coming over all the time. Steve, on the rebound from yesterday's bombings, was hair-triggered. 'Where in hell are the British? What are they doing? Look at that clear sky!' It seemed strange, all right; chiefly because we were still innocents about the fantastic

## FRONT TRIP IN ALBANIA

Greek-Albanian mountain weather. (Actually the Drina Valley gave the Fascists marvellous skies all week, but adjoining valleys only forty or sixty miles eastward were blotted out by clouds and rain five days out of seven and most of central Greece was equally hopeless for flying. Later we learned that the R.A.F. fighters had been trying for days to get off the ground. Up in front of Tepeleni it looked as if there must be the same brilliant sunshine for hundreds of miles around.)

Most of the time the Fascists stayed up at 12,000 feet or more. They never tried to come down and bomb the road or hunt for the Greek batteries. The Greek 105's kept quiet when the bombers came over, careful not to betray their positions. But they also had a couple of anti-aircraft guns, bought from Germany like most of the Greeks' cannon, and the Ak-Ak crews were letting go all the time. We got unexpected thrills out of them.

Whenever the silver planes came anywhere over the centre of the valley the anti-aircraft guns snapped like terriers. Then something happened that I'd never experienced before. The blazing sun caught the copper-nosed, steel projectiles only a few hundred yards after they left the gun barrel. We could actually see them, in processions of fives, slashing up and up and striking toward the soaring metal eagles far above. They were beautiful, gleaming, thrusting things, these shells, and every time it seemed as if they were going to get some of the planes.

All the way up they kept our hearts in our throats. Would they get-one? Yes, they must do it this time. No, they were behind. No, they were too low. Now, try again! No, they're still behind. The planes are too fast. Surely they'll get them this time. Up and up like silver darts. It was a tantalizing game. But the Italians were always too high or too far off. We began to wonder if our Greek battery would ever get one of those devilish white birds and send it careening earthward.

Then, far across and above the mountains on the other side of the river, it happened—or so we thought. Far across the

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Drina and high above the snowy, six-thousand-foot shoulders of the Nemeroka range we saw another group of planes plunge out of a mass of clouds. A sudden flame winked from one of them like a lighthouse beacon. It was a hit. A hit from somewhere, we couldn't tell where. She was punch-drunk and wobbling. Yes, she was falling!

Steve and I shrieked with joy. 'They've got one! They've got one!' We saw sheets of fire girdle the airplane as she lapsed into a dizzy plunge. Then we saw her shoot downward, twisting, twisting, twisting. 'Get your camera,' I yelled at Steve. Now I saw the white, flowing break of a parachute, and then another plane. It was circling around and around as plane and parachutist plummeted down toward the spot where the snowline ended and the green hills began.

The plane fell fastest and a cloud of black smoke rose from the hill where it crashed across the river. But the fighter kept circling around the swaying figure below the white envelope, and long after the envelope had settled to earth. We were puzzled by the plane's behaviour. If the pilot was a Fascist, why did he risk being plugged by Greek batteries, or were they too far away? We went over to ask the Greek anti-aircraft boys. They said the pilot was British and he had circled around to show Greek soldiers on the mountain where the Italian parachutist had fallen, so they could capture him. That seemed to make sense.

All this happened just at noon. Steve and I lunched by the river-bank. Afterward as we were walking along the road, an ambulance rolled up and an officer in R.A.F. blue stepped out. 'I've got to get my pilot, the one the Italians shot down over on that mountain—as soon as possible,' he said to the Greek major. 'My God, was that plane one of yours!' we gasped. The major explained that a Greek doctor and soldiers had been on the way to rescue the British aviator for more than an hour now.

The squadron leader wanted to climb up the mountain and meet them, and so did we. But you couldn't tell what ravine they would bring him down; whether they'd go first to the village over to the east or whether they'd strike straight

for the river. So there was nothing for us to do but wait. 'Who was it?' we asked, almost fearfully, hoping it wouldn't be one of our friends. 'Don't know for certain,' said Squadron Leader Hickey. 'Anyhow he's wounded. I could see the blood soaking through from his leg. But he's alive, all right. I flew within thirty feet of him and he signalled me. He knew I was sticking by.'

Hickey was one of the few men in the squadron we hadn't met before. He had a chiselled face and fair hair and spoke with an officer's decisiveness. He was tense in the way a man is tense who has just come out of battle and still has responsibilities to fulfil. He must have circled for fifteen minutes over the spot where his pilot fell. Then he had dashed down the valley and managed a dangerous landing on the boggy valley lands below Argyrocastro. In an incredibly brief time he had located an ambulance and an interpreter, and hurried up the valley—to the place directly opposite where his man had been shot down.

We had to wait and keep waiting and that was harder on Hickey than on anyone else. 'We've got to get that man back to a hospital,' he said. The tone left no doubt about his follow-through. But we had to wait, lounging beside the river, and we persuaded Hickey to lunch from our well-filled knapsack. Reluctantly he posed for a picture, and just after that—out of a long silence—two Fascist shells came screaming down right at us. Luckily we were in a tiny gully with an eight-foot bank. We threw ourselves against it just as the explosions roared. A lot of dirt and gravel showered down on us. The shrapnel flew much farther. The bursts were only about forty feet away. Obviously the Italians had changed their range at last. We had to get out, and get out fast, running northward under the river-bank as much as we could. Shells kept breaking behind us and Hickey said he'd rather be up in a dog-fight. In twenty minutes we were out of their orbit, but much less nonchalant.

We had to wait for more than three hours and it seemed hellishly long. At last a little procession emerged from the tumbling, darkening hills and slowly marched toward the

other bank of the river. Then came another interminable delay which we couldn't figure out. The squadron leader was going to wade the river, but somebody found him a horse. Half an hour later another horseman dashed back for a stretcher. The rescue party had had nothing but a board and had carried the wounded man on it for five hours down the mountain. Finally the Greek soldiers started carrying their burden through the first narrows, wading waist-deep; then across long rocky stretches of river-bed, then through another channel.

Hickey got back first. 'He's in pretty bad shape,' he told us.

'Who is it?'

'Cooper,' he replied.

Sammy Cooper. Steve and I wanted to curse. Probably we did. I was thinking of the dinners we'd had with him far behind the lines a month ago. I remembered Sammy especially because he was the gayest, lustiest man in the squadron. One night he drank a lot of wine to kill his lonesomeness. He had a shock of wavy blond hair, clean-cut features, and a fighting jaw. 'I want a woman,' Sammy had growled. 'I tell you I want a woman to-night. But I only want one woman in the world—and she's in England. I don't mind fighting. But why in hell won't they let us fight in England? Why do we have to fight out here in these bloody mountains? . . .' He showed me her picture. She was all that a man like Sammy deserved. 'I want a woman,' Sammy was saying again. 'Somebody who'll be tender and who'll understand me and make me forget this God-damned war—for one night anyhow. Damn it, you can't even have that.' The words stayed with me long afterward. In war-time, in this kind of war, you understand how men feel like that. But there was nothing ahead but months and months and months of fighting for Sammy and his squadron mates. Even if they came through, it might still be years before they'd get back to England. She was a lovely-looking girl, too. Would she still be there? . . .

Now we were waiting for them to bring Sammy across the river. They were coming, but slow as the hinges of time—

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indistinct shapes in the blackening night, with the ambulance waiting behind us on the road.

'Hello, Sammy. Everything's all right, Sammy. It's Steve. It's Lee. We're going to get you in soon.'

The reply was mumbled, almost a groan. Sammy's voice was very thick, partly from cognac, partly from other things. We packed him into the ambulance as gently as we could. 'I'm cold. I'm freezing with cold.' Hickey and Steve and I tucked five or six blankets over and around him. Then we started.

There was a little overhead light in the lorry. I sat on Sammy's left, and first Hickey (the 'C.O.', as the pilots would say) sat on his right. Then Steve sat there when the C.O. went up front to keep the inquisitive Greek sentries from holding us up with minutes of useless talk—an inevitable Greek failing. Hickey was marvellous at shutting them up fast and pushing the ambulance ahead. In the dim light Sammy's face was covered with grime or something. Gradually I made it out. His eyebrows and eyelashes were burned off. That was why he rarely opened his eyes. For a long time I was afraid he might be blinded, too.

'Cigarette—cigarette, please,' he begged. I lit one for him and he held his mouth open for it. Then his lips clamped down on it and he sucked long and deeply, three times in rapid succession. He didn't have strength for more, but it seemed to ease him for the moment. His lips were swollen. They were dry to the verge of cracking and his teeth gritted at every jolt in the road. The squadron leader held a soldier's canteen to his lips, while I lifted up Sammy's head. He drank as I've never seen anyone drink before—long, devouring gulps. Then his head fell back limply and the pains came back in a little while.

'We got some of them—didn't we?' Sammy would ask when he came out of it. We lied with great emphasis. We had to lie. Now Steve was on the other side and we each held one of Sammy's hands, trying to get them warm, to get the blood circulating again. When the ambulance hit the holes in the road, his clasp tightened like a vice on my fingers and

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on Steve's. Then the groans broke through his unwilling teeth, and his head went back and back as if he were trying to push the pain out of his body. Sometimes it seemed more than any man could bear. Sometimes I sat and looked at the long damp locks of tangled hair, the fine forehead, and the grey face and I thought about what freedom costs, and how little most people know what it costs. And sometimes I thought about those statesmen who thought you could compromise for freedom and bargain with truth. They were bitter thoughts.

Sometimes the road was fairly good for a short distance. Then Sammy talked a little. 'Did the others—get through—all right? Did we—get any of them? I got—that bloke's undercarriage—I'm sure—I did.'

'Sure thing. You got his undercarriage, all right,' said the C.O. But we knew it wasn't true.

'I couldn't do—anything more. My cockpit—on fire. Sorry I couldn't save—the plane. The fire blinded me. . . . I got it—in the leg. Then I couldn't—see anything. . . . Oh! . . . Oh! . . . Oh! . . .'

Then the long groans again, and Sammy asking if it was much farther now, and we lying again and saying it was just round the bend below, and Steve and I beginning to understand what the wellsprings of hatred and revenge are like—and all the time telling Sammy we'd be at the emergency hospital in a couple of minutes now. Then the ambulance lumbering on for twenty more minutes, and on until it seemed we'd never reach it.

When we got up the hill and into the kitchen that served for an operating-room, the Greek surgeon worked fast. Several Greek officials clustered around to do everything they could. It was eight hours since Sammy had been shot down. I didn't see how he could stand much more. He was terribly pale from loss of blood. The surgeon snipped away the emergency bandage between the knee and thigh on his left leg. As the scissors snipped higher and higher Sammy stirred. 'Don't let them cut off the old man,' he said. We laughed, nervously but thankfully. In all this tenseness it

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would still be Sammy who would break the strain and show us how to laugh. Then all the laughter drained out of us when we saw the wound.

We saw it and looked and looked away again, not wanting to see. It was a great raw gash, about fourteen inches long and many inches wide. The C.O.'s lips tightened into a hard straight line. He pulled me aside. 'Explosive bullet,' he whispered. 'Sssh! Don't let him know.' Sammy's cries turned us back toward the operating table. The surgeon had both his hands far inside his leg, running his fingers along the naked bone. He was probing for a fracture. There was one, but not there. It was higher up in the hip, the worst possible place. Even if Sammy pulled through, he'd probably be lame; maybe he wouldn't be able to fly any more, but you must never tell a wounded flier that. Looking at the great ugly hole in his leg, we wondered how Sammy had survived these hours and hours of torturing descent while the Greeks carried him down, without a stretcher. 'They were awfully good to me,' he had said weakly when we first put him in the lorry. 'They carried me for miles and miles.'

Now the doctor's hands were outside again. 'I'm sorry--- awfully sorry . . . really couldn't help it,' Sammy was saying. Then they poured the iodine on the raw flesh, and it was almost unbearable to see his face. We begged the surgeon to put him under with morphine. He said Sammy's heart was too weak; he had lost so much blood, and he might not be able to stand it. 'I'll give him a transfusion,' volunteered Hickey, and we echoed him. It was no good. In this place they couldn't test the blood group and they didn't have the necessary apparatus. They could give an anti-tetanus injection, and they were doing it. The pain was terrible as they forced the fluid in. One and then another of us stood beside Sammy and held his hand and brushed his forehead. Why, why in God's name, couldn't they give him morphine?

But it seemed as if every fate conspired to refuse Sammy ease from pain. The pain seemed more than any man could stand. All this time he was begging for water. 'Steve! Water.



Water, please. Oh God, give me water.' Then Sammy's voice would break and fade away. Then he would rouse again. 'Water! *Nero! Nero!*' (The Greek word for water.) 'For Christ's sake—water!' The doctor said too much water would make him vomit again, and he was too weak; he couldn't stand the vomiting. At last we couldn't bear it. They would only allow a quarter of a glass. Sammy took it in two gulps, and sank back begging for more.

Sometimes he cried for cigarettes and we reached hurriedly for one. But the doctors shook their heads. It would be bad for him to smoke too much, they said. No morphine, no water, no cigarettes, no blood transfusion—nothing but the hell of suffering. It was like that for three hours, until they got his leg rebandaged and the rest-machine fixed under his broken hip. That was to ease the jolts on the road. They said he would have to go all the way back to Jannina, four or five hours on the road, without any rest, so he could get a blood transfusion to-morrow. The thought of that ride churned me up inside. I couldn't feel right about it. I didn't see how Sammy could stand it, weak and pain-racked as he was. But what could we do? Hickey would have their own R.A.F. surgeon waiting on the other end. That was the only thing he could be hopeful about.

Sammy was quieter now, but with the quietness of exhaustion. He had had nearly eleven hours of this without a minute's sleep. They got him back on the stretcher, and we had to tell him he still had to ride a little farther. 'A little farther'—that was the most damnable lie of all, but how could anyone say 'five more hours'? It helped that he seemed resting a little. Just the same, I didn't feel right about it. I didn't like the idea of carrying him out into the cold night and into the ambulance again, but it seemed the only thing to do. The doctor must know if he couldn't stand the morphine. But if only they would let him sleep a little first—if only he could lie still and sleep for an hour or two.

Up the cobbled road in the darkness the soldiers carried Sammy as gently as they could. I lit another cigarette and put it between his teeth. He pulled and pulled. He couldn't

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use his hands, they were under the blanket, so I had to watch for fear he would pull the fire all the way down on to his lips. I kept my hand on his shoulder and kept talking cheerfully, as if everything was all right now.

Inside the ambulance Hickey, Steve, and I tucked heavy blankets around and around him, and one around his head so there would be no draughts on his neck. We gave him a tangerine, a piece at a time, and that helped. 'I feel much better now,' Sammy said. We fixed another blanket and left another tangerine for him and the C.O. said: 'You'll be all right, and back with the squadron any day, Cooper. Just take it easy, old chap.' We had to keep saying something. 'Don't steal all the good-looking nurses down in the hospital, you damned heart-breaker,' we said. Then: 'We'll be down in a few days. We'll be in to see you, Sammy.'

He seemed to be half asleep and we crawled out, not liking to do it. The door of the ambulance was shut. It backed up the hill and then pulled round the corner and down. We stood watching it disappear and thinking and praying in our own way. Then we stumbled through the darkness and down to the hotel. Hickey was up until after two in the morning. It took that long to get a call through so as to have Doc Astbury up and waiting for Sammy when they brought him in. We gave Hickey Dan DeLuce's room, but with the windows blasted out, all the rooms were frightfully cold.

### *20 December*

I slept little and badly. Mostly I shivered and tossed around, thinking about Sammy, wondering whether he was at the hospital by now and whether he got through? I couldn't get Sammy out of my mind. At daybreak Hickey came in. I think he had been too cold to sleep much, but he came in to say good-bye and thank us for the too little we had been able to do. We said we'd be back in three days now. We'd have dinner with him at Jannina. He must give our best to Sammy.

We couldn't sleep, so we had figs and an orange for break-

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fast. Still nothing hot to drink. My six-day beard made me feel more unbathed than ever. I managed a half-shave, but left a stubble of moustache and chin whiskers just to see if I'd look like Santa Claus at the end of this trip. Even the beard came in white. After these three days it should have turned black or red.

Progress toward Tepeleni being so slow, Steve and I decided to try to get over to the coast and up to the Chimarra front, north of Santi Quaranta. It's about sixty miles. Nothing to do but hitch-hike. With a two-day food supply in our knapsack we started walking down the valley road. First we caught an ambulance, then a truck, then an officer's car as far as Jürgesatis, where the road to Santi Quaranta swings south-west over the mountains. A truck loaded with soldiers took us in and all the way to Delvino, on the other side of the divide. It's a lot of fun to travel with these explosive, pantomiming Greeks. If Il Duce could see some of the gestures and faces they make while shouting: 'Mussolini . . . ha-ha-ha!' he'd probably call off the war. One fellow we met on the road to-day was the grimace champion of the entire Balkans, if not of all Europe.

Between lifts we hiked several miles to-day and quite a few Fascist planes went over, but they never bothered to attack anything on the highway. I don't feel especially tired physically, yet my eyes are heavy-lidded and have a burning sensation most of the time. I can tell that fatigue is creeping up from the way my eyes feel. Steve had his let-down from the bombing yesterday, but he had a closer call than I did. Anyway we'll try to get to Chimarra, if the Greeks take it in time.

Near Delvino we found a colonel who took us to the home of a Greek who had lived in Albania for years. He had a wife and two pretty daughters named Elisabeth and Antogina. Their father, before his marriage, had once operated a restaurant in Ipswich, Massachusetts. Like all Greeks from America, he greeted Americans almost like blood brothers. Of course we must stay for lunch—and of course we needed no urging. It was our first hot meal for three days, splendidly cooked and wonderfully abundant and served with shy smiles by Elisa-

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beth and Antogina. When we returned that evening we discovered that Mr. Abazoglu had an equally attractive niece, named Hermione. Elisabeth smiled less than the others. The Italians had taken her fiancé, along with several other young Greeks of Delvino, as a hostage early in the war. They had had no word of him since. Could we enlist the American Red Cross to arrange for his exchange? Questions like these are difficult to answer.

The colonel gave us his own car and chauffeur to go up toward the Chimarra front. We had driven all day through tossed-up mountain ranges, all held by the Italians less than a month ago. Now the car slid over the last rise and the Ionian Sea and the snow-capped northern tip of the island of Corfu lay before us, and below us the white-walled, semi-circular cluster of houses which is Santi Quaranta.

The seaport's commandant told us the Greeks were closing in on Chimarra, but the Fascists were bombing hell out of a ten-mile stretch of road some miles south of that town. We couldn't go up in daylight. Before dark a big limousine drove up and out stepped grey-haired, youthful-faced General Loumbas, who had helped us to get to Corfu nearly a month ago. I have never met high military commanders anywhere so universally at ease with newspapermen as Greek divisional and army corps commanders are. We had made a rendezvous to meet again in Santi Quaranta. Well, here we were. In Philiates, the general had had only a thin soup and sardines to offer us, but now we would have a dinner worthy of the name. And what a meal—marvellous fish and fresh grouse and heaps of French fried potatoes! With two majors and the port's naval commander we celebrated in grand style.

After a conversation with front headquarters it became definite that Chimarra had not yet been taken. We were urged to drive up to headquarters in the morning. But we had promised to return the colonel's car that night. So back to Delvino and another warm welcome, quite as if we were members of the Abazoglu family. They arranged for us to sleep in the home of the mayor of the town. It was already difficult for me to keep awake and it was nearly midnight.

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Nevertheless, as soon as we entered the mayor's house we were offered the inevitable cups of coffee. Steve nobly accepted, but not even for Greek hospitality could I ruin all chances of a night's rest. We sat close to the fireplace, waiting for the coffee, and every nerve in my body was shrieking: 'To bed! To bed!' Suddenly I realized that my margin of endurance had been worn down to the thin edge. I couldn't make idle conversation. I couldn't even make the effort to be decently polite. I could only sit and stare and say to myself: 'You mustn't let yourself go.' I fell into bed with enormous relief, but knowing we should get less than six hours' sleep at most. 'Never saw you so glum in my life,' Steve said. 'If you could have seen your face, sitting by that fire!' Luckily, I couldn't.

### *21 December*

Forgot to say that in Santi Quaranta last night we came upon a company of Greek soldiers and a band escorting a coffin. The coffin was draped with the Italian flag. The Greeks were giving a military funeral to a wounded Italian soldier who had died.

We were awakened before 6 a.m. I could have slept for hours longer. It was still very dark, but we heard airplanes flying directly over Delvino. The first night-flying I've heard anywhere on the Albanian front. We rode for three hours on the way to front headquarters in the mountain village of X—. All this coastal range is granite in convulsions. Once I looked back and counted twelve different saw-backed shoulders of rock or rock and snow. The Fascists held all that five weeks ago. You wonder how any army, superior in weapons and in numbers, could possibly be forced to yield such terrain.

We got some of the answer yesterday and more to-day. A colonel told us the Italians, when first invading down this coast, had fifty-two guns against three Greek field pieces in one sector—yet the Greeks held them off and also had no casualties from Fascist fire. Last night we dined with the major

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who led the first Greek troops into Santi Quaranta. He had a battalion and one battery, and two rivers separated them from the defending Italian lines and the town. Starting at four in the morning, his men waded through ice-cold water for three hours. An hour later they drove the surprised Fascists out of Santi Quaranta. This entire range, starting inside Greece some fifty miles away, has been taken by an uninterrupted series of flanking movements along one height and then another.

As soon as we reached X— we saw fresh samples of the officers and men who started an invasion and have continued it in reverse. Like all mountain villages in southern Albania, X— is built on the side of a sharp roof. No streets, just paths. We had to dig with our toes, a stiff five-minute climb, to reach the house where we were to report. Its porch was crammed with about thirty prisoners from the Siena division, just brought in—a miserable-looking lot. Steve talked with them in Italian and I in French. Later we talked for more than an hour with two career officers, both lieutenant-colonels.

Like hundreds of surrendered Italians we've seen, the men had no fight in them. 'We've had enough,' is their usual statement, and they look it. Some said frankly: 'We threw away our arms.' They make a pitiful spectacle. They have no heart for this war, and many have no respect for what Italy's leaders have done. They're afraid to say so, but you see it in their faces. Many look more like whipped dogs than men.

'Who ordered you to attack Greece?' I asked the first lieutenant-colonel. Naturally, he didn't want to fix responsibility. 'The Italian people didn't want it,' he answered honestly. His grey-green overcoat was dirty and torn. He was in his fifties, heavy-built but haggard from fatigue. He was a sincere patriot and an honest man.

Lieutenant-Colonel Damiani was much more typical of the Italian officers we have conversed with on various fronts. He was a wriggler, always squirming and sidestepping; usually evasive and continually seeking self-justification by whatever strategy might work. A tall and handsome man, who

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made you wish that he was capable of being straightforward for five minutes at a stretch. He had the nerve at first to claim that Italy started her invasion of Greece with only twenty thousand troops in Albania. When Steve wouldn't swallow that, he said *perhaps* Italy had twice that number. Steve was far more polite with him than I should have been, on the grounds that you shouldn't take advantage of a man's bad luck. Which is right enough when people fight fairly, but when a man insults your intelligence by bald-faced lies, my reaction is that he has waived all right to be treated as a gentleman.

This particular colonel also insisted the Fascists had no intention of destroying the independence of Greece when they invaded her. All they wanted were a few naval and air bases. The only honest statement of his which I can recall was: 'We made the mistake of taking the campaign too lightly at the beginning.' Among captured Italian officers the wrigglers are predominant wherever we have seen them. The majority of young Fascist officers are also arrogant. They leave an unpleasant taste in your mouth after you have conversed with them.

We lunched with General Backos, commander on this front, who remarked: 'The Italian morale is too low. They always abandon their weapons. The hillsides are covered with machine-guns they've left behind. Good soldiers may have to retreat, but they can always take their arms with them. The Italians only fight with their aviation. If they didn't have that we'd be in Valona already.' The general told us that Mount Peluri, key to Chimarra, had just been stormed and the Greeks would probably occupy Chimarra to-morrow. 'But they're bombing the road below the town fiercely. Ninety planes were over yesterday. You can't go up in daylight. It's dangerous for you to leave here. You've seen the planes over here all morning. The road into Chimarra is impassable for a car at night—too many bomb-holes for driving without headlights.'

Time was running too short. We couldn't spend two or three days trying to get into Chimarra. We had all the back-

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ground of the battle. Maybe if we went back to Argyrocastro, it would now be possible to get into Tepeleni. Everywhere we went we heard reports that the Greeks had taken, or were about to take, Tepeleni.

Steve, by now, had become thoroughly sceptical. I'd determined to get into Tepeleni, if there was any conceivable way of doing so. 'We'll get back and they'll still be stuck right where they were,' said Steve, the realist. 'You ought to know by now that these Greeks are the world's most incurable optimists. The farther you get from the front, the more you hear about towns that have just been captured. Argyrocastro was captured daily for ten days before they got there.' All of which was true. The Greek people had become thoroughly solid on the invincibility of their army, regardless of the fearful obstacles and handicaps against which their troops have to fight.

We had to stay indoors whenever the planes were over, and sometimes we heard bombs down the valley. The general thought we shouldn't venture on the road, but the colonel in Delvino had helped us enormously and he needed his car. So we started back, Steve and I watching the skies carefully from either side. Steve, with great common sense, had become wary of being caught in any more bombings whereas I was more inclined to be fatalistic—perhaps because I thought we were safer on the road than in any village or town.

Our chauffeur unexpectedly revealed we were taking the long way round in order to get gas at Santi Quaranta. Both Steve and I protested—we had the same feeling, that Santi was no place to go on a clear sunny day like this. The chauffeur and the Greek corporal wouldn't listen. So we drew up, half an hour later, before the major's headquarters just in time to hear warning cries of 'Aeroplano! Aeroplano!' We dashed in the door and down into the crowded cellar. At that moment the bombs came. They roared in our ears, and the building trembled like a leaf. Again we crouched, gritting our teeth and damning the foolhardy chauffeur. When we came out, a bomb-hole yawned thirty yards from the



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building and a machine-gun bullet, piercing the trunk of our car, had bedded itself in the rear seat just where Steve had been sitting beside me. If we had arrived two minutes later—

Having had the fireworks, we got the gas and then left Santi Quaranta very fast. In Delvino we thanked the colonel for his great assistance. He had no other car available, so we'd have to hitch-hike back over the mountains to Argyrocastro. Lieutenant Rougeris said he'd keep a man watching for a passing truck. We shared our cheese and bread and opened up our last bottle of wine for a round-robin toast to Greece. Then Steve and I stretched out on benches by the fireplace in the lieutenant's office and slept soundly for more than an hour. The lieutenant had said he thought their troops would occupy Tepeleni to-morrow.

It was eleven at night before a truck came along. We climbed in the back with three Greek soldiers. Fortunately there was a canvas top, for the wind was devilishly cold. These men had been going for twenty-four hours, but they were in wonderful spirits, laughing, joking, gesticulating. They made us take the most comfortable seats on a tarpaulin, and one stretched out on the hard floor, where every bump was a bruise. It was characteristic that another soldier held a lighted candle for half an hour, until it completely burned down, simply because he felt we'd find the trip more cheerful with a light. I was especially grateful for the canvas which shut us in and for my fatigue. In daylight the curves and sheer drops on this road had been maddening. Now we couldn't see them—we merely knew we were skirting Kingdom Come every time the truck slowed down and twisted to left or right. I decided I wouldn't think about it and with that resolution dozed most of the way.

The truck only went as far as the junction of the Argyrocastro main highway on the other side of the range. There we stamped up and down for more than two hours, pounding our shoes down heavily as a partial cure for half-frozen feet. It was much too cold to stand still. Under a bright moon the white mountain peaks across the Drina River were very beautiful, but at half-past three in the morning we had

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still found no truck going up the valley. Everything was swerving off into fields down below, and Steve got the bright idea of going over there.

A battery of new heavy guns were getting mobilized to go up to the front. They were bigger guns than the Greeks had yet had anywhere in this sector—which seemed to indicate that the Italian artillery, behind concrete emplacements, still hadn't been jarred loose from the mountainous Verdun around Tepeleni. The commander said we could ride up with the guns. But we had a long, cold time to wait. Under the full moon in this wild, desolate valley a large group of Greek soldiers were singing gaily at the top of their lungs. I listened, and despite a great weariness and my icy feet I was thankful to be there and to hear these Greek voices. These are the things that make you know who will win this war in the end.

At last Steve and I doggedly climbed the long hill up into Argyrocastro. It was five-thirty in the morning and the stars were still and cold and the roofs of the town lay drab but friendly in the light of the sinking moon. All day we had wondered if the hotel would still be there, along with our typewriters and belongings. We had had to gamble on leaving them behind.

The hotel was still there, with several gendarmes sleeping around the bathtub in the ground-floor hall. We had brought our own candle with us. We pulled our feet up, one step at a time, crunching over the broken glass until we reached the fourth floor. All the rooms were deserted. We were the only ones who still ventured to sleep in this skeleton of an icebox. We crawled into bed with our clothes on and slept for two hours. My eyeballs had been burning steadily all day. Anyhow, some time or other, when we got a chance to write them, we had several good stories to show for it.

*22 December*

Actually I was awake and shivering after about one hour of sleep. As yesterday and the day before, I lay awake, wondering about Sammy. Did he pull through? I knew it would

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be a miracle if he had. When we got down into the street we learned that the Greeks had not yet taken Tepeleni—and to-day was our last chance to get there before starting back. We had to get back to Jannina to-night. Then Colonel Dracopoulou came along.

'Your friend, the wounded pilot, he died in the ambulance on the way to Jannina,' he said. 'And the other Englishman, the officer who came with him—he was shot down in the big air battle just across the valley from here the next day.'

So we knew the worst. I can't remember just what Steve and I said, but I know how we felt. We were thinking about the two of them, Sammy and Hickey, for many days. The colonel was telling us there had been fifty Fiat 42's against nine R.A.F. fighters. The fighters carried our friends, boys in one of the greatest British fighting squadrons anywhere in the British Empire, and two of the nine had been shot down. (Some days later we learned that Hickey had jumped safely from his blazing plane. Then a Fascist had circled around him and machine-gunned him on the way down. He was an Australian with a wife and two children. The Greeks buried Hickey and Ripley together, across the Drina Valley and just below the snow-clad Nemeroka mountains where they fell.) In two months of fighting over Albania, Hickey's and Sammy's squadron had the following record: Against four losses of its own this squadron had shot down 47 Fascist planes, cases confirmed, plus 12 more which were 'probables'—an average of nearly twelve enemy losses to one of its own. Under the most terrific war flying conditions existing anywhere in Europe, this is an amazing record. . . . Steve and I had been decorated. It was and is an invisible medal—the friendship of these men.

Steve said it was useless to go up to the Tepeleni front again. Obviously this savage weather had made fighting conditions almost impossible. Perhaps it was foolish, but I couldn't bring myself to leave without knowing—from officers on the spot—just where the front lines at Tepeleni were. Enough of these behind-the-front reports about Tepe-

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leni being taken to-day or to-morrow. So we took the long, long road to Tepeleni for the last time, and we got just about as far as we had been before. For an indefinite time snow and ice had saved the Italians on this front from disaster.

We hitch-hiked down the Drina Valley once more. Ever-obliging Greek officers took us in below Argyrocastro and served us real cocoa, wonderful to taste; then waved us good luck as we clambered aboard another truck. In less than four hours we were back in Jannina dining with Sammy's friends. They were a little band and had lost three of their number in two days. We could see the strain in their faces. Sammy's laughter and amazing virility had left a gap which could not be filled. What a strange Christmas to be facing! They had been promised a rest and Christmas dinner with many other R.A.F. men back at Larissa—providing this abominable mountain weather would let them through. (Even that was denied them, we found out later on.)

After dinner that night we waited to hear Churchill speak on the radio at ten. He talked straight to the Italian people. It was a magnificent speech and his voice rang with conviction. 'One man, and one man alone'—that was Churchill's theme, again and again. The squadron men listened with keen, serious faces. As they listened the toll of their unceasing, never-even battle fell away from them. These were words which rekindled their pride in being British. When the voice had finished they were more than ready to carry on. I went to bed wondering whether Winston Churchill could possibly imagine what his leadership had done for a lonely group of young aviators who were fighting the toughest air battles of this entire European conflict, over mountains of the damned, hundreds of miles from home. I thought of the defeated British Territorials I had seen in the Namsos sector in Norway nine months ago. This was something different. This was the thing which wins wars.

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*23 December*

An unlucky day. We waited for a long chance of flying back to Athens, and Christmas Eve in civilization. We got left because Greeks have such a disconcerting habit of telling you something quite different about a situation every half-hour or so. The plane did take off finally, however, and to a considerable extent it was my own fault that we missed it. I had planned originally to stay in the plane to write my stories. When a newspaperman fails to follow his own instincts he usually deserves what he gets.

*24 December*

Rain and clouds. Impossible to fly now, and maybe for several days. So we'll have to hitch-hike 350 miles back to Athens and we'll spend Christmas Eve on the road. Lost three hours this morning while Greek officers were trying to find a conveyance. Finally Steve and I found a rattle-trap Ford truck and started out in the rain. Two miles and she broke down, but we shifted into a fine, fast truck with a driver who sang mournful Greek songs with a curious tinge of Arab lament to them, all the way down to Arta.

We were armed with a potent letter from a general. Thanks to that the Arta authorities provided us with a Nash car in good condition and a first-class little driver, to take us more than one hundred miles down to Agrinion. It was after dark when we got there. The colonel had no auto available and urged us to stay the night. Steve and I had decided we'd fight our way all night, even over the nightmare mountains to Delphi—anything to get to Athens for Christmas night. Steve also had a broadcast to do. We said we had to go on, by hitch-hiking if not otherwise. The colonel phoned Arta and got permission for the car to take us on as far as Mesolonghion, down on the northern shores of the Gulf of Patras.

That was where refusing to take no for an answer paid big dividends, as it usually does. We reported to the military

command in Mesolonghion at eight-thirty Christmas Eve. The captain on duty could find no conveyance, and our good little Athenian chauffeur had orders to return to Arta at once. All the way he'd been praying he could take us on and surprise his wife and baby on Christmas Day. He was a good soldier. He smiled when he said good-bye.

The captain didn't see a chance of finding us a truck or car so we could get on towards Athens that night. Then he remembered something. 'Say, would you mind going to Athens by boat? There's a hospital ship leaving in half an hour.' We bought a lot of food in a restaurant. In the little ship's salon men with all kinds of wounds were stretched out on benches and on the floor. There were many soldiers with bandaged feet, and one, just behind the table where we gulped down our food, groaned with agony from feet which were severely frozen. Most of the wounded were very quiet. Steve and I slept on the floor and later in deck chairs.

Soon after daybreak we passed through the Corinth Canal. The sun shone brilliantly again. Before noon our ship was drawing up at the docks in Piræus. A band piped zestfully for the wounded soldiers. Dark-eyed, vivacious Greek girls in attractive brown uniforms stood waving and cheering. They were waiting to greet the wounded. Many had trays of coffee, tea, and cakes.

The moment the gangplank descended, Steve and I grabbed our bags, but the girls had seen our uniforms. It was a hospital ship. Naturally we must be British wounded. Before Steve realized what it was about, a glowing young creature, gratitude and admiration sparkling from her eyes, was pulling his knapsack out of his hands, trying to carry it ashore.

'Wait a minute,' I explained. 'He's no hero. He's only a newspaperman.'

Steve said that was the unkindest cut of all.

Just the same, they paid us every attention and showered us with tea and all sorts of cakes. We really didn't object.

Half an hour later we were in our bathtubs in the King George—our first bath for twelve days. It was noon on Christ-

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mas Day and I lay in the hot water reading letters from home. On the Mesolonghion road last night I had counted it up. During the past five years I had spent only one Christmas and New Year's Day with my family. I vowed I would make it up to them next Christmas. That was one thing I wanted to do more than anything else. But who could tell?

A war is a war!

## Chapter 13

### 'DEATH IS ONLY AN EPISODE'

O STRANGER WHO MAY PASS THIS STONE,  
TELL OUR COUNTRYMEN THAT WE LIE HERE  
TRUE TO OUR TRADITIONS AND OUR LAWS.

*(Inscription on the tombstone of the Spartans  
who died at Thermopylae, 480 B.C.)*

If we had waited for the capture of Tepeleni what a dreary, freezing, unbathed, hungry, heartbreaking winter we should have spent along the savage Drina Valley. Tens of thousands of nameless Greeks did that, keeping alive on round chunks of hard bread, dried figs, and an occasional strip of salted mackerel. Hundreds of them remained on the blizzard-swept heights of the Nemeroka range, attacking and edging forward night after night, until their feet were fearfully frozen. In the big schoolhouse-hospital, far down the valleys in Jannina, a great many men lost one foot or both. Some lost their legs. The feet of some quadrupled in size from the swelling and were dyed an ominous purple-black which extended far up their legs. They were the third-degree cases, like the poor Russian peasants we had seen in Finland. Gangrene. . . . The nurses tried to keep them hopeful up to the very end, but when the feet and legs were purple-black like that, even double amputations were usually a wasted surgical effort. Feet frozen that badly are ugly things to look at. They always reminded me of the big Ukrainian peasant we talked with in the prison camp back of Tolvajarvi, the one who told us how the Soviet authorities had taken him from his farm hut, wife, and six children and had shipped



him off with one of the first Red divisions to invade Finland. 'They take you no matter how many children you have,' the Ukrainian said. He could only lift himself on his elbows. His shapeless legs lay on the floor like black, half-rotted logs. He talked about home with a yearning, hopeful light in his eyes. He didn't know he would be dead in a few days. Now, in January and February 1941, another year had passed and Greek soldiers in the Jannina hospital waited for the same futile amputations and the same end. The only difference between the Ukrainian peasant and these doomed Greeks was that the Greeks fought of their own free will and knew exactly what they were fighting for. But for all their heroism and sacrifice, Tepeleni could not be taken, not before spring in any case. Mussolini had been crushingly defeated. Nevertheless, the gods of ice and snow had saved Tepeleni, Valona, and Durazzo for the Fascists.

When March came the war-god of Nazism, Adolf Hitler, was compelled to substitute for the ice-gods of the Albanian mountains. Hitler alone could save Mussolini from disaster. He counted upon a bloodless victory, but he gravely discounted both Greek and Serbian hearts. This was why the Balkan war, which Nazi spokesmen for many months had insisted the Führer would never allow to happen, suddenly became inevitable. Thereby the Nazis' time-schedule for their long-planned invasion of Great Britain was seriously and fatefully retarded; and by this fact it is conceivable that the ultimate defeat of Nazi Germany was assured. Time will give the answer to that. It cannot be doubted, however, that Hitler's expectations of dominating Yugoslavia without resort to a single military blow and of frightening the Greeks into acceptance of a dictated peace were drastically deceived.

In order to clean up the annoying mess which Mussolini had made of his Greek war Hitler counted upon a double 'shake-down', first of the Belgrade government and then of Athens. The Nazis' military occupation of Bulgaria served as the initial step. When this peaceful conquest was completed in early March, German and Italian divisions faced the Yugoslavs on six of their seven frontiers. Then came

Berlin's sharp demand that Yugoslavia join the Axis. In Belgrade the weak-kneed Cvetkovitch government and the chief regent, Prince Paul, resigned themselves to another Munich and prepared to surrender their country's freedom without a fight. The Axis pact was signed, but Belgrade's appeasement government could not conceal the ugly truth from the aroused and fiercely patriotic Yugoslav people. Fires of revolt burned especially high in every Serbian heart. The Greeks had shown that they had no fear of totalitarian giants, that they knew how to die. Could the Serbs, with their magnificent traditions as a fighting people, ever besmirch their self-respect and honour by doing less than the Greeks had done? Just two days after the Cvetkovitch capitulation, in the middle of the night of 27 March, came the event which astonished the world. A spontaneous revolt, headed by army and air-force officers, swept the appeasers out of office. Young King Peter assumed the throne, overthrowing the Regency. The Yugoslav people swarmed the streets of their cities and towns in a wild ecstasy of joy. They, a small and humble little Balkan people, had rebelled for the privilege of fighting a virtually hopeless battle against the most devastating and ruthless military juggernaut the modern world has ever known. They had freely chosen the path of hunger, anguish, and death—but the path of hunger, anguish, and death *with honour*. No nation in the course of this Second World War, neither Poles nor Finns, neither Norwegians nor Greeks, had taken a greater or more imperishable decision.

The story of that historic *coup d'état* in Belgrade was magnificently reported in all its soul-stirring drama and with superb understanding and fidelity of detail by Ray Brock of the *New York Times*. 'Up the street 30,000 voices rose in the war song of the beloved Cetniks, the song which only last night was banned by the Cvetkovitch government after the capitulation to Germany. The song was taken up by a troop of cavalry starting its way through the multitude and the riders paused only to accept handfuls of mimosa from the crowds and tuck the bouquets into their bridles. . . . The rising and falling chorus of voices filled all Belgrade through-

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out the day and into the night as new thousands poured into the streets. The solid, unending chant of voices repeated and repeated: "Up the war! Down the pact! Up the war! Down the pact!" . . . An estimated 60,000 jammed the Terazija to-night as the profoundly moving day, described by one old Serbian soldier as "one of the gravest in our history", drew toward its close. The shouting and tumult had abated somewhat, and the voices that rose in song as the stars came out diminished in strength, hollower and deeper. Perhaps there were fewer students and children and more of the elders who had reflected during the day upon what Serbia and all Yugoslavia must face in the coming days. At any rate the fighting chorus that rose from the vast crowds to-night, "Sprenite, Sprenite, Chetnice!" sounded to some listeners as if it were no less a battle cry than a benediction.' This, indeed, was a dispatch which any newspaperman in the world would be proud to have written.

The next morning a young Serbian officer was so absorbed by the thrilling headlines that he collided with Ray Brock as he was trying to buy a newspaper. 'It's wonderful news, isn't it?' smiled Ray.

The young officer's face beamed with pride and happiness. 'It is marvellous,' he said. 'Marvellous!' . . .

'But what about Germany? What about to-morrow?'

The young Serb stood very straight, his eyes shining. 'To-morrow?' he answered. "To-morrow we shall gladly die for having *lived* yesterday.'

This is exactly what tens of thousands of Serbs did during the next three weeks. One month from the night of the Yugoslav revolt German troops entered Athens. Two months from that night Nazi parachutists were battling on the island of Crete. Yugoslavia had been partitioned and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes had gone the way of Czechoslovakia and Poland. Greece had been swallowed up. The Nazis had won yet another great military triumph, almost incredible in its speed and completeness.

Was resistance worth what it had cost the Yugoslavs and the Greeks? A great many 'practical' people would describe

their resistance as magnificent, but magnificent idiocy. Such persons have never known what it means to exist as slaves under the heels of foreign conquerors, under Persians or Romans or Turks or Germans. Such persons, particularly if Americans, have no conception of the plight of a small people existing for centuries as subject races, as both Serbs and Greeks existed under the Turks. The practical-minded also have not the slightest conception of the lot of the Czechs, Poles, Norwegians, Belgians, Dutch, and French in Nazi-occupied territories. They ignore equally the historic rule by which virtually every race on the European continent has survived and maintained its individuality—only by the courageous determination of its people to fight for survival and their right to independence. Moreover, I am convinced that the rationalists utterly overlook the immeasurable moral value of any national battle which is bravely fought, however crushing the ensuing defeat may be. During the First World War the Serbs won the reputation of being unsurpassable fighters. The establishment of the Kingdom of the Yugoslavs was chiefly the result of recognition of their fierce patriotism. Led by the Serbs, the Yugoslav people were so supremely brave as to refuse any lesser fate than to go down fighting. By doing that, like the Poles before them, they can never be deprived of an honourable place in the New Europe which, one day or another, must inevitably replace the 'New Order'. However terrible the sufferings of the Yugoslav people may be under the unpredictable duration of Nazi oppression, they will surely emerge one day with a spirit hammered into finest steel, deathless and invincible. Such a spirit can only endure and strengthen through self-respect. Capitulation, however 'practical' the excuses for it may sound, destroys the foundations of self-respect in an individual or in a nation.

The paralysing Nazi defeat of Yugoslavia was due to numerous factors, all of which are not yet clear. Nevertheless it is unquestionable that Belgrade's straddle-the-fence, appeasement-minded Cvetkovitch government was in great measure to blame; by refusing to co-ordinate secret plans

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for defence with the British and Greek high commands, by maintaining friendly relations with the Berlin-Rome dictatorships against the overwhelming opposition of the Yugoslav people's instincts and desires; by neglecting, especially, to build deep tank traps which would block every road of invasion from Bulgaria. Had these defences been prepared adequately Nazi divisions, regardless of their terrific superiority in aviation support, would never have been able to break swiftly through into southern Yugoslavia and cut off the Yugoslav forces from the Greeks and British. In this respect the Nazis' Blitzkrieg through Yugoslavia registered much swifter and more stunning progress than it had any right to make. Thus the true fighting calibre of Yugoslav troops never had a chance to show itself at anything like its full value.

Far sooner than they had a right to expect, Nazi motorized divisions were sweeping down to Salonika and engaging the Greek and British forces which were anchored on Mount Olympus. For reasons which defy all logic and remain unexplained, the main Greek army in Albania failed to withdraw swiftly into northern Greece. The towering six-thousand-foot pass, north of Metsovo and Jannina, was apparently left open to the Germans, even after they had broken through and captured Larissa. Even one Greek division on that pass could have held up the Germans for a very long time. Having driven from Kalabaka up over that single winding narrow road to the crest of the mountain range, I know what an impregnable line could have been formed there. At this time it remains a mystery why Greek forces in strong numbers were not stationed there. Elsewhere, in central Greece and along the eastern coast, perhaps no more than a hundred thousand Greeks, Australians, New Zealanders, and British fought a remarkably tenacious and skilful withdrawing action for more than two weeks. Anzacs and Britishers held Thermopylae for days, fighting magnificently and only falling back when they were threatened with being cut off from the rear. Throughout the entire battle for Greece the Anglo-Greek allies were outnumbered at least three to one on the

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ground and fifty or seventy to one in the air. Below Thermopylae stood no natural barrier to keep the Germans out of Athens, yet the invaders had to spend days of severe fighting before at last they broke through to the capital. For the Nazis it was still a brilliantly successful campaign and a fabulous victory. Nevertheless the initial resistance of the Yugoslavs and the achievement of the British and Greek troops was vastly underestimated by most casual readers of newspaper headlines in America.

The importance of the Nazis' Balkan campaign in the spring of 1941 must be gauged in relation to Hitler's chief military objective—namely, a knockout blow against the British Isles. At the end of the previous October, as we started driving furiously to get to the Italo-Greek war, what was the generally accepted military outlook for Germany? The consensus of best-qualified military opinion throughout the Balkans can be summed up as follows: Greece could be defeated by Italy and occupied by Fascist forces, it was thought, at any time within the space of one month. Yugoslavia would be coerced into joining the Axis without firing so much as a pistol. That was the prevalent belief. Consequently it was thought that Nazi-Fascist arms were likely to conquer Egypt before April 1941, and probably with a short campaign of no more than two months. Whether Hitler attempted to conquer Egypt or not it was assumed (before the Greeks fought) that the Nazis would have to expend no military resources upon domination of all the mainland of south-eastern Europe and therefore that they would be free in the springtime to throw their entire armed might into an unprecedented attempt to invade and conquer the British Isles.

What was the situation the following May, six months later? Hitler's armed forces had been compelled to fight in the Balkans and to expend tremendous aerial and terrestrial power in order to subjugate Yugoslavia and Greece. At the beginning of June the Nazis had finally seized Crete, the last and most strategic Greek island. These conquests had cost them more than two months of undesired warfare in the Balkans, but the invisible costs were far greater than that.

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In Yugoslavia and Greece the Nazis now had an additional 23,000,000 bitterly antagonistic, fanatically resentful people to police and control. Deliveries of most vital raw materials, oil, and food from Rumania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia into Germany had been completely disrupted for more than two months. Thousands of German planes had been utilized in active combat, thereby eating up vast quantities of the heavy lubricating oils which were Germany's greatest need. Now, as June came and July loomed ahead, Hitler was embarked upon an inescapable battle for control of Iraq and Egypt. In June anyone with an intimate acquaintance of the superiority of German forces could scarcely doubt that the entire eastern Mediterranean, Egypt and Suez included, was likely to be in Nazi hands before autumn—and that, to some, might make the Hitler war machine appear invincible. But in reality, even in June, it appeared that Hitler had been drawn south-eastward on a far and most risky tangent. Already he had expended so much armed force in the New Balkan war theatre that Germany's chance of invading the British Isles had been postponed by several exceedingly costly months. It might even prove true that Hitler had lost his last great opportunity to invade Britain. If Nazi arms had not become involved in the Balkans in April and May, an all-out blow against England might well have succeeded. At that time American-made weapons could not reach Britain in time or in anything like sufficient numbers. The American government's policy was still uncertain. Wavering America might well have been confronted with a *fait accompli* in the doom of British resistance. When the German conquerors entered Athens, Yugoslav and Greek courage, backed by far-sighted British statesmanship, had adjourned the possibility of a German attempt to invade England into midsummer, 1941, or perhaps even indefinitely into the autumn. By that time American intervention on a determined scale had already been assured. Thus it was possible that the little Greeks and Yugoslavs, through their soldier dead and their reduction to temporary enslavement, might well have fought the first decisive engagement in the Battle of Britain. This is a matter

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which constitutional appeasers and such practical-minded former stock-market specialists as ex-Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy have never taken into consideration. The Yugoslavs and the Greeks preserved their own honour and self-respect. But they did more than that. They, far more than any others, gave the British people an opportunity to survive and free parliamentary governments the opportunity yet to defeat Nazism.

After seventeen months of active war-reporting this is my firm conviction, even though (as of June 1941) I am willing to admit that Egypt and all of north Africa may well be in Nazi hands within a comparatively short time. Whether that does or does not happen before September will be of much less long-term importance than whether Nazi Germany is able to gamble everything upon a tornado-like offensive against the British Isles before the autumn of 1941. If Germany does not or cannot do that, I think it very doubtful that Hitler will finally win the war. That, however, will of course depend upon the degree of solidarity of both the American people and American nerves. Naturally differences of opinion exist about this point of view, but I do not see how even the most rationalistic observer can deny several outstanding aspects of the Yugoslav-Greek campaign: (1) its severe strain upon Nazi war supplies and upon transportation of essential raw materials to Germany from the Balkans; (2) its consequent disruption of Germany's main war effort against the British Isles; (3) the tremendous moral and psychological value of Greek and Yugoslav heroism and its resultant effect upon the millions of subjugated masses throughout Europe.

During one of our hitch-hiking trips from the Tepeleni sector to the Chimarra sector in Albania, Steve and I argued the question of the practicality of resistance to the Axis war machines. 'If this war goes on, Europe is simply going to be in a terrible mess,' Steve said. 'Think of the millions who are going to starve. What is the good of this fighting here? Hitler won't let the Greeks win. He can't let them win.' Even in the second month of the Italo-Greek war you had to admit



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Berlin would be bound to interfere eventually and rob the Greeks of their victory.

'But what in the hell will a hundred and fifty million Europeans have to live for if Nazism wins?' I asked. 'Don't you think most of them would rather be dead than spend the rest of their lives doing forced labour for the enrichment of Nazi party leaders, and under the heel of the Gestapo?'

'But look at the ghastly destruction of entire cities, the poverty and disease,' Steve said. 'Why wouldn't it be better for Britain to make some kind of peace with Germany while she has a chance?'

'So you think Hitler would reform and actually keep any agreement he might make with the British? I thought you were a realist.'

'I don't see how the British can hope to defeat Hitler now.' Steve argued.

'They can't without us,' I admitted. 'But nobody thought the Finns could do what they did. Nobody thought the Greeks could do this. It all depends on whether our own American security is involved, doesn't it?'

I wasn't arguing in the same manner as when I had first arrived in England at the outbreak of the war. I hadn't remained long in England and I hadn't even been within ear-shot of British propagandists most of the time. I had simply spent many long months in Finland, Sweden, Norway, travelling across Russia and through all the Balkan countries. I had merely been seeing at first hand what happens to peoples who refuse to see that their freedom is threatened and do not fight, or fight when it is too late—or fight when they cannot get strong allies and prepare a common plan of resistance in advance. I had seen the horrors of war, but I had also seen the horrors of abdication, capitulation, and slavery. The widespread fear and bureaucracy inside the Soviet Union had depressed and nauseated me. But I had not lived there long enough to become so obsessed with Bolshevik oppression as to be blinded by the far greater contemporary menace of Hitler's Brown Bolshevism. Hitlerism had swallowed up twelve countries since March 1938, and would

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soon conquer two more in south-eastern Europe. Beside this Nazi domination of the heart of an entire continent, constituting the cradle of civilization, Stalin's Baltic and Bessarabian acquisitions were merely crumbs. How could any thoughtful person fail to see where the unique and stupendous peril to all the world's freedom now lies?

By June it was all over in Yugoslavia and Greece, save for the long months of unceasing passive resistance which these brave, hardy peoples would maintain so long as they lived, unyieldingly month after month or year after year. In the final days, while the Nazis were taking over the Greek islands, an American correspondent heard two Greeks (who had formerly worked in America during their younger days) discussing what might happen on their island. One of the waiters remarked: 'I don't worry about what the Germans can do to us. We Greeks are a little people—but we have big hearts.' That, in its final essence, is the whole story of the seven months of incredible resistance which the Greeks made to totalitarian assaults upon their freedom. Why did the Greeks fight? Why was it that the Greeks and the Finns astonished the world with their military miracles?

It was my great good fortune to live with the Finns and the Greeks through two of the most inspiring chapters of the first two years of the Second World War. Had I been with the Poles, much of the story would have been the same. Had I happened to have been with the Norwegian army I should have encountered a similarity of experience in many places. Nevertheless, there are certain things about the Finnish and Greek wars which have placed them apart in the public mind; and that is why friends often ask: Why were the Finns and the Greeks different? I think the question is a fair one. In the answer to it I believe there is much which we, as Americans, may do well to contemplate.

First, I should say that the Finns and the Greeks, against all rationalism and generally accepted 'common sense', fought in the face of hopelessly overwhelming odds because of the exceptional unity of their character. Both these peoples had been hardened by exceedingly stern climates; one by

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polar winters and a pioneer existence, the other in a rock-strewn, soil-eroded, sun-scorched land. Generation after generation of Finns and Greeks had been compelled to struggle ceaselessly for a modest existence. In addition, Finns and Greeks alike had never been free from the threat of invasion, or from its cruel reality. Over the centuries the Russians had ravaged Finland again and again. Over tens of centuries the Greeks had been attacked by Persians, Romans, and Turks. Because of these repeated assaults and long periods of foreign domination these two little peoples nourished the heritage of a fierce love of freedom and a great fighting tradition. As national entities Finns and Greeks ranked extraordinarily high because their racial individuality had been solidified by vicissitudes and hardship. They had the deep, untouchable pride of peoples that have demonstrated their worth repeatedly throughout a long and glorious history. They also had the unusual kind of self-reliance which little peoples, survivors over all inclemencies of climate and human opposition, develop to a marked degree. These qualities may be summarized by the one word *character*. In composite they account for that priceless possession which is known as the fighting heart. Inside the fighting hearts of Finns and Greeks alike burned the flames of an unquenchable faith. No people can fight as they did without that kind of hearts and that kind of faith.

Even so, neither the Finns nor the Greeks could have battled on month after month unless they had been united in spirit as well as in character. The British, too, despite the former appeasement inclinations of their own Cliveden set and despite the bungling of Chamberlainism, have achieved this sort of spiritual unity. But it is most important to note that *political* unity is an enormously important part of spiritual unity when any nation is at war. Both the Finns and the Greeks had political unity from the moment their countries were invaded. In Finland Socialists and reactionaries joined hands in the common cause. In Greece partisans of the Metaxas dictatorship and Venizelist republicans united with equally high patriotic devotion. Internal party politics and

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domestic hatreds were buried the moment that Finland and Greece were threatened. No such thing as a 'peace' party existed in either country. It was most remarkable in Greece, where a great many prominent and wealthy citizens hated General Metaxas with an undying hatred, to find that all such sentiments were voluntarily locked in a cupboard for the duration of the war. In Finland the active co-operation between conservatives and propertied gentry on one hand and the Socialist Finnish masses on the other was also extremely impressive. As a result both Finns and Greeks fought as a united people, united in experience, tradition, and character, but also united politically. It happened that both nations were blessed with amazingly efficient army officers and surprisingly good soldiers. But without character and political unity no degree of military genius would have enabled Finns and Greeks to write new sagas of grandeur into their countries' annals. To-day I can imagine no greater honour than to be either a Finn or a Greek. God grant that we Americans are capable of proving it to be as great an honour to be an American. We cannot do more than that, whatever we do.

I talked with Premier-General Metaxas only three weeks before his sudden death. His face did not reveal the strain of leadership which those first desperately uncertain weeks of the Italian invasion had imposed. He was calm and perfectly at ease, but his eyes kindled with pride when he spoke of the Greek people. He had never doubted for a moment, he said, how the Greeks would respond or how they would fight. Then he said something which I shall never forget as long as I live.

'After all, for us—who are Greek Orthodox—death is only an episode.'

For all those who love freedom or hope to preserve freedom in our time *death is only an episode*. I thought of the gallant little Finns, fighting alone on the Karelian isthmus against scores of thousands of fresh Russian divisions and bombed by hundreds of Red aeroplanes. I thought of the Norwegian regulars and volunteers who battled for two months against

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enormous Nazi odds. I thought of the magnificent Poles who held Warsaw for three weeks or more and who still fight, without a country, on land and on the sea and in the air. I thought of the British people in Coventry and in scores of cities and towns; of the R.A.F. boys flying over those damnable Albanian mountains day after day. I thought of the little Greek soldiers in front of Tepeleni and up in the freezing snows of the Nemeroka range and of the Greeks with mud-slimed hands piling rocks into the ruts beside the pontoon bridge below Leskovik. I thought of all the great and noble people I have met and seen and known during these months of war—the only nobility and the sole aristocracy of the world in which we live. All of these humble people, unknown and unsung, had repudiated for ever the damning, corroding, rotting philosophy of defeatism and 'practicability'. All were and are infinitely bigger than themselves. How could they do it? Where did they attain this spiritual grandeur? Why?

'Death is only an episode.'

When I reached home, people came to hear me lecture and often people said: 'Well, you certainly have had some wonderful experiences.' Perhaps they were meaning to ask what it was that I, personally, had got out of covering the war. In any case, I have had ample time to ask myself that question and I know the answer. I knew it even as General Metaxas was speaking. I have had many things—comradeship, a certain amount of danger and hardship, adventure, high laughter and deep sorrow, despair and unexpected joy, disillusionment and a quietly deepened faith. I have had very many things which will be part of me for the rest of my days. But of them all nothing is richer and more heart-warmingly real than this: I have had the inestimable privilege of working and living and sometimes sharing a small portion of their dangers with people for whom freedom is the breath of life itself, and death—just an episode. I have been with little people who were very great. I have seen what makes man more than man, and woman more than woman. I have seen the tawdry, shameful abdication of frightened or greedy per-

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sons who would save their skins or their fortunes at all cost—at any cost. But I have seen, far more often and again and again, the sublime grandeur of a great legion of little people who would make no compromise with falsehoods, murder, slavery, and dishonour. I have seen men and women die and, dying, live for ever.

You may think it strange when I say I am truly thankful that all these things have become a part of my life, an indelible and living pattern upon my mind and heart. You may think it strange when I confess that there exists a language in our present world which I cannot tolerate and will not speak. You may think it strange when I say that some things more than compensate for any risk a man may undergo. But it does not really matter whether these things seem strange or not. I know now some things which I always believed but did not know nearly so well, nor with such ineradicable certitude. I know now that, in this revolution-convulsed world in which you and I live, there is only one kind of people with whom I care to live or die; only one kind of people whom I can ever hope to trust or depend upon; only one kind of people whom I can safely count among my friends. They are not those who insist upon playing things safe to the very end. They are not those who daily practise a personal compromise with the inhumanity and immoralities of Nazism. They are not those who insist that America or any nation can preserve its soul through glorification of materialism. They *are* those, and those alone, for whom death is only an episode—those to whom freedom of the human spirit means the attainable and the coming dawn of a new world in our own twentieth century. They are the only men and women whose modest lives offer hope and fulfilment and nobility to all mankind while yet we live or while our children live.

## *Chapter 14*

### LONG VOYAGE HOME

**F**rom Athens I flew to Cairo; and a few days later, from Cairo 2,400 miles straight south to Stanleyville in the Belgian Congo. Stanleyville lies almost exactly at the geographical heart of Africa, within a few miles from the spot where the Congo River flows northward across the equator. The whimsies of war had taken me from some 250 miles inside the Arctic Circle all the way down to the equator itself. I flew on across the Congo jungles and the Ubangi River to where, at last, the same ocean which touches all the Americas laves the palm-fronded beaches of the French Cameroons; then on again to Nigeria and the Gold Coast, just beyond Togoland. After that it required many days by ship, zig-zagging up the coast to Freetown, Sierra Leone, and ever north to Casablanca and Lisbon. Had it been possible to sail through the Mediterranean the direct Athens-to-Lisbon route would have been approximately 2,000 miles. My big circle, through and around darkest Africa, covered more than 8,000 miles and required an unrelaxed battle against space and time, plus the unpredictable dislocations of travel under war-time conditions. 1 February was my deadline for reaching Lisbon, but experts in Cairo and the Congo had assured me I'd be fortunate to get through in from six to eight weeks. Actually, by great good fortune, I got through all the way from Athens in twenty-five days—and our Portuguese ship dropped anchor in Lisbon's Tagus River shortly before midnight on 31 January.

Down in Lagos, Nigeria, I started to inscribe my identity on the hotel register when a name, two lines above, caught my eye: 'R. J. Casey'. 'It can't be Bob,' I thought. 'He's in

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England.' Then I looked opposite the Casey and read: '*Chicago Daily News*.' I let out an Indian warwhoop, demanding of the startled clerk: 'Where is this man? Where in hell is he?' The clerk informed me that he was in Number 4, and my own bags had just been placed in Number 5, I started dashing across the lobby and bounced right off Robert J. Casey's midriff just as he came in the door. We both said things which the good Lord must have understood as coming from stunned minds and overflowing hearts. I hadn't seen Bob since that day in September 1939 when he left Victoria Station for France chirping: 'Old soldiers never diet.' Well, here he was in a pith helmet and a pair of shorts, a sight for sore eyes and looking as if a diet had been about the only phenomenon he had not yet encountered in this war. Bob was on his way to Egypt, and he had been exactly twenty-eight days aboard ship, getting from England as far as Nigeria. His ship had docked a few hours before my plane got in from Stanleyville. We had a drink. In fact, we had several.

'Too old to cover a war, eh?' chortled Bob.

'Listen, you doddering old roll of flesh,' I protested, 'I'm just out of kindergarten compared with you. You're the doyen of all American war correspondents. I'm ashamed to be going home with you still over here. We ought to go home together.'

We had only a few hours that one evening, but we made the most of them.

If he was lucky Bob would be flying up to Cairo the way I had come down. It had been a marvellous flight. First our plane, burrowing steadily southward, rode dazzling heat-waves for hundreds of miles over a blinding, seemingly endless furnace of shimmering sands and parched lava escarpments. Below Khartoum the desert gradually faded and the earth's dry, crusted surface lifted slightly into rolling savannahs pocked with isolated, dusty shrubs and trees. Then we soared over the elephant country near Juba, deep in the southern Sudan, and the Belgian steward on our Lockheed plane reminded me that the Sudan is seventeen times larger



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than England and Wales. Finally we crossed over into the Belgian Congo (which is eighty times larger than Belgium). Once well south of the Moto gold fields we found ourselves winging boldly over the vast unbroken and untamed equatorial forests. From the air no slightest patch of soil or cleared land can be seen; nothing but flat interminable reaches of tangled, luxuriant jungles, indescribably matted with tropical trees and growth of all kinds. The only interruption of this dense verdure is achieved by the sluggish brown African rivers as they serpentine serenely and nonsensically like huge boa constrictors ferreting their way through the green motionless forests.

We flew for hours and hours, first over the pitiless, eye-torturing desert and then over the lush, emerald carpet of the equatorial forests. For thousands of miles we seemed suspended above the awesome, majestic body of Africa and these hours afforded ample time for contemplation. In this infinitude of space it was as if some supreme magician had lifted us out of the world and simultaneously had performed the incredible by lifting me out of the war. The blackouts—all the blackouts from England to Finland, Sweden, and Norway, and from Rumania and Bulgaria to Greece, Albania, and Cairo—fell suddenly, swiftly away, dispelled by the blazing light which burns for ever above Africa's mighty, immovable 'heart of darkness'. Up here in this immeasurable light you could think at last about the jigsaw pieces of the war and try to put them together. You could fit the pieces together, bit by bit, and begin to see more clearly the pattern which united them. You could also look at yourself and ask yourself what the war had done to you. You haven't changed very much on the outside. Your friends all recognize you easily enough. But how was it you felt when you first reached England seventeen months ago, Stowe? And how do you feel and think to-day?

Remember how you used to argue about British and French stupidity having bought this war, so let them take it. Well, the French couldn't take it and the British could, but things have changed a terrific lot, haven't they? Re-

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member how you said the appeasers had killed republicanism in Spain and had blindly armed Hitler? Well, they did all of that, all right; but from that you claimed it was chiefly a European mess (which is how it began)—and you know perfectly well that it's a great deal more than a purely 'European mess' to-day, don't you? It was a European mess so long as there was any possibility of keeping it in Europe, but now it's on the doorstep to Asia Minor and it's in North Africa, and whenever the Nazis get to Morocco and Dakar—which may be any day now—they'll be on the doorstep of South America, too. If the Nazis drive the British out of Egypt (and that's likely to happen, the way things are going), they'll be in a position to control all of this mighty African continent. If they control even the upper two-thirds of it, and down as far as Liberia or the mouth of the Congo on the Atlantic coast, what nation in the world is going to prevent them from dominating virtually all of Latin America? Hitler will have Franco's Nazified Falangists working for him in every Latin-American country. German goods, manufactured by 'subject race' Czechs, Poles, Dutchmen, Belgians, and Frenchmen at forced-labour wages, will be dumped at impossibly cheap prices from Mexico to Argentina. How can American products compete with that kind of sweated labour and anti-capitalist dumping? Can't you imagine how American wages will fall and how American unemployment will boom? All that prevents this from happening now is British resistance, isn't it? For a strictly European mess this thing reaches an awfully long way, doesn't it? This thing is not merely a war, it's an octopus—an octopus whose coils already stretch more than half-way round the world. This octopus also has Japanese arms. If the British lose Egypt, and the French colonies surrender completely to Hitler (which they're virtually certain to do), the coils of the octopus will soon be twisted around four continents and be taking a death-hold on South America. All this has now happened or is immediately possible—and in the autumn of 1939 you still clung stubbornly to the hope that this war would stay inside Europe!

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You said let the British and French 'take it' because their leaders were either blind as bats or craven as rats. You hated the blindness of some and the lack of principle of others. For one motive or another they had sold decency and integrity and national honour down the river along with the Ethiopians, the Spaniards, and the Czechs. You hated them for it, so you said let the Englishmen and Frenchmen who tolerated that kind of injustice boil in their own kettle of fat. It's true we Americans never tried to do anything to prevent all this, but it wasn't primarily an American job anyhow. You were like the Irish-Americans who nurse an undying hatred for England, for reasons which had a pretty sound basis twenty or fifty years ago. Now that the British government has bought what it asked for, let them take it. There was nothing very charitable about that attitude, Stowe, but it was based upon some pretty hard and nasty facts. So you and the Irish Americans said: let them face the music.

Well, that was a nice luxury so long as the French had the Maginot Line and a reputedly unbeatable army of five million men or more. Then you saw that army knocked out within five weeks and you saw Laval, Bonnet, Chautemps, and other French politicians do precisely what you always knew they were capable of doing—crawl on their bellies dragging the good name of France in the mud. So you were right about waiting to see whether the French could take it. Most of their leaders had the perfect mentality for any of Hitler's 'subject' purposes, and the real Frenchmen had no chance or were promptly disowned. But the British kept on taking it, and meanwhile the capitulation of France had doomed Rumania, Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey—in fact, all of central and south-eastern Europe and most of northern Africa. You saw the Nazis taking over in most of these countries. You saw Greece and Yugoslavia condemned to defeat because Vichy had disbanded or corrupted the French army in Syria. You saw Hitler's agents and armies conquering all of Europe; preparing to seize all of Asia Minor with its rich Mosul oil fields and getting their toeholds on northern Africa. You could hate Lavalism as much as you liked, but

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that wouldn't change any of these portentous developments. The European conflict had become a full-statured world war now, whether you liked it or not. And whether you like it or not, Stowe, there is only one remaining great power which can conceivably stop Hitler and Nazism—the United States of America. There is also only one great power which at this moment stands in the way of Nazi Germany's devastating thrust for world domination. That power is Great Britain combined with her dominions. You, like the Irish-Americans, have had a deep-rooted grudge against certain British policies and certain British governments. Well, would you rather fight Nazism alone or fight Nazism with the British as allies?

If Hitler conquers Britain do you think America can remain free, alone and by herself?

No, you don't. Just about one chance in a hundred thousand.

Well, things have changed a terrific lot, haven't they?

Remember how you flew over with Bob Casey, thinking this war would be pretty much like the last war—a long dragged-out fight on the western front, and all that? Pretty nearly everybody was thinking of this war in terms of the last. But there wasn't any Norway in the last war and there wasn't any German-imposed 'New Order' nailed into the prostrate bodies of the Balkan peoples. The most important things about both Norway and the 'New Order' in the Balkans were not military conquests. The most important factor of all was a paralysingly efficient *revolutionary* technique. This was the unseen war, and the truly undeclared war. This was the thing which poisoned a nation's morale, divided its people into bitterly hostile groups, undermined its defence forces, crippled its industrial production, disseminated fear and confusion. This was the Nazis' greatest weapon and the weapon by which they had risen to power inside Germany—the weapon of planned, organized, perfectly timed Revolution. It was Revolution such as the Bolsheviks throughout twenty years of their supremacy in Soviet Russia had never faintly approached in power, in insidiousness, and in efficiency.

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You thought you were going to Europe to report a war, didn't you, Stowe? For a man who had recognized the Nazi war threat for what it was at the very outset of Hitler's régime, that was unforgivably naïve of you. War is an old-fashioned business compared with what you have seen the Nazis doing, all around the far-flung circuit where you have worked these past months. There were no fabulous Trojan horses in the First World War; no series of great and inexplicable betrayals; no civilian-clad regiments of Gestapo men operating in a dozen different countries; no extermination of Czechs, Poles, or Jews; no legions of Nazi 'salesmen' and advanced agents systematically taking over the reins of economic and political control in one country after another. All these are the under-cover manifestations of Revolution. You have seen this Revolution in operation. Now you know that there are no boundaries which can contain it. Nothing in the world can hope to restrain and stem its triumphant course except the unqualified military defeat of Nazism. You flew over to London in September 1939 thinking that America wasn't menaced and perhaps would not be menaced. Now you had better ask yourself that question again. On the basis of what you alone have seen and observed from one end of Europe to the other, you can only admit that there is not a single free country left in the world which is not menaced by the Nazi Revolution. The battle for Europe is in its final stages in Greece. Hitler's battle for world domination is in reality the battle for Britain. Nazi control of the British Isles can mean only one thing—control of most of the Atlantic Ocean. That in turn must inevitably dictate one of two alternatives to the American people—unending surrender to Hitler's ever increasing demands or the necessity of fighting a Nazified Europe and Nazi-inspired Japan, alone and without allies. . . .

Well, you didn't see the complete import of all these things until they rose up before you, month after month, and smacked you in the face. You didn't want America to go to war. . . . You didn't count upon war (and Revolution) *coming* to America. They are spreading so fast now that you have to

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fly to get away from them, and you have to travel over 8,000 miles in a gigantic circle in order to reach the only remaining European seaport from which anybody can now voyage to the United States. When the Nazis reach Portugal they can bomb the Azores. Dakar is only 1,620 miles from Natal, Brazil—and there must be a good many Nazi advance agents in Dakar right now. A European mess? The American Revolution of 1776 was certainly an American mess. Instead of twenty-four hours it took many weeks to cross the Atlantic Ocean in those days; nevertheless, the French Revolution did not long delay in following that in America. But those were clumsy, one-cylindereed, and utterly one-sided affairs compared to the Nazis' twentieth-century revolutionary methods. What is Hitlerism? *Streamlined Revolution!* You can no more isolate yourself from this kind of revolution than you can prevent winged propaganda from penetrating the far corners of the earth in an age of radio transmission.

So you went to report a war?

If only it were a war, Stowe! War is simple.

So we are in Stanleyville, and this immense Belgian Congo is now the only free Belgium that remains in the world. So we are at Duala in the Cameroons, and this, with the adjacent and gigantic expanse of French Equatorial Africa, constitutes the only important refuge for Free Frenchmen in any section of the globe. So we are in Nigeria and the Gold Coast, and British troops work tirelessly under the merciless African sun. So there is a little British cargo boat going up the coast and this is the only way to reach Freetown, where perhaps—if Lady Luck smiles most indulgently—there *may* be a ship going to Brazil, or an oil tanker cutting straight across the Atlantic to Trinidad, or maybe a craft of some kind steaming up the coast to Lisbon. The deadline is getting fearfully close, for I am scheduled to begin lecturing in America the first week of February. Maybe, if and whenever I reach Lisbon, the Clipper will be held up for days by winter weather. Unfortunately, the southern route via Bolama in Portuguese Guinea will not be open for at least another month yet.

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The British crew of the *Dauntless Mary* had food which, as British food comes off the stove, was fit for little more than to keep body and soul together. But they possessed British stomachs (an enormous advantage in war-time, I should think) as well as British hearts. We zig-zagged constantly, with never so much as a cigarette allowed on deck after dark on account of a possible encounter with a German raider or submarine. The rear decks were heaped with several tons of lumber and petrol, a beautifully inflammable combination. I didn't worry about that because not a soul on board, from the captain down, seemed the least bit bothered and because, in war-time, you learn not to worry about much of anything until it actually happens. So we had a very pleasant week, and the captain and chief engineer made a monkey out of me at draughts—which is English for checkers. The officers and crew were all British seamen. They knew every smallest detail of their jobs. They were out of England for weeks or months at a time. They had to run the gauntlet of Nazi submarines and bombers every trip, in and out. Their wireless had to be absolutely silent whether they were at sea for thirty days or ninety days at a stretch. As I say, even the officers' mess consisted of miserably dull food and none too much of it; yet dangers, monotony and hardship were all accepted without complaint. This time, if they reached home, it would be after an absence of more than three months. But whenever they got home they would walk down the street to where their houses ought to be, wondering if they were still there—never knowing how many funerals there may have been in their families since they went away. When you talked with them you understood how and why they were in this war to the finish. The skipper was a giant of a Yorkshireman, who had been broken in on sailing ships at the age of fourteen. He had a chin like Winston Churchill's and he was made of the same sort of stuff.

'This Hitler, 'e's got to be beat and 'e's going to be beat,' the skipper declared. 'There's not a mahn or woman in England that won't see this thing through. But the women and children back home, they're the ones that are really fighting

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this war. It's harder on them than on anybody else, and I tell you, they're wonderful. Every time I get home I marvel at those women and children. Yes, sir, 'e's going to be beat!'

Down in the galley the pasty-faced, thinly built little steward rarely smiled. I didn't understand about that until the skipper told me how the steward had been shot up at Dunkirk with several months in a hospital after that. Then he had signed on in the merchant marine before he was really well, because Britain needed all the experienced seamen she had. Down in the tropics he had been ill and laid up again. But one morning I found the steward whistling as he cleaned up his cupboard. His sudden smile looked queer against the deathly pallor of his face. 'We're goin' to be home in just a few weeks,' the steward said. 'I'm getting everything in order. We're going to be home soon.' I knew what that meant. The skipper and chief engineer had told me all about how the missus and the kids slept through the toughest raids now, but whenever they got back they themselves always had sleepless nights most of the time on account of the bombs. The steward was whistling and overflowing with a feeling of content because, with good luck, he would soon be home among the bombs. *Home among the bombs!* What do you and I know about things like that? When I said good-bye to the men on that little British cargo boat I felt somehow as if I was deserting them just when the going would be worst. I wanted them to get through to England. I wanted 'Good luck!' to be everything under God's blue heaven that it is meant to be. I had lived another tiny little corner of the war with them. Somehow it didn't seem quite sporting to walk out in the middle of it. Now I would probably never know whether they brought their sturdy little ship safely alongside a dock somewhere in the British Isles, or whether an entire list of names was crossed off the papers in the office of a British shipping company. To-day I still don't know. But these are the men who keep Britain in the war.

Three days later I was aboard a Portuguese passenger ship. It sailed with all its lights blazing at night and it served disgracefully huge meals and it had an orchestra which played



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gaily every evening. Everything was much too comfortable. It seemed indecent somehow, and it didn't seem quite right to be able to sail up the west coast of Africa just as if there were no war, as if these waters were not infested with submarines, as if the world was at peace when in reality the brushfires of war were spreading more deeply down this dark continent every day. We steamed past Dakar, that westernmost tip of Africa which now juts out so ominously toward northern Brazil and the island outposts of the Caribbean Sea. We saw an airplane from Dakar. People said it was French, but how could they tell? Why would Vichy Frenchmen be patrolling this west African coast? Vichy was not at war. Were 'Vichy' seaplanes from Dakar patrolling the seas in order to tip off Nazi submarines whenever they might spot British cargo ships? Were German naval, army, aerial, and Gestapo 'technicians' already in Dakar? Who could tell? Dakar was a closed book—for a little while. Some day Dakar would be rediscovered. Maybe the American people would have to discover Dakar, too. But they would have to discover Dakar soon—very soon.

What was it that old General Erich von Ludendorff, quartermaster-general and reputedly the most brilliant military strategist of the Kaiser's Imperial armies, had told the Hungarian statesman with whom I talked in Budapest? This happened 'way back in 1924. Ludendorff had described 'the next war'. He said it would be a war of slashing movement and speed; a war of airplanes, tanks, and movable light artillery. The Hungarian said Ludendorff gave him a startlingly accurate description of Hitler's Blitzkrieg—this sixteen years before the world ever heard of Blitzkriegs—and then added: 'Germany will conquer the entire continent of Europe . . . but for all that, the decisive battles of the next war will be fought in Africa. I think the outcome will be most dubious for the Germans.'

How would General von Ludendorff feel about that today if he were alive? Well, Hitler might have most of northern Africa before another six or nine months, for all anyone could tell. Even if he had Egypt the battle for Africa might not be

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more than begun. Perhaps over here, at Dakar, Ludendorff's prediction would reach a part of its final fulfilment. Perhaps the struggle for Dakar would yet be one of the decisive battles of this war. You can't see Dakar, but it is there just the same. That's how it was from our Portuguese ship, and that's how it is from Montana, U.S.A.

We could not go ashore at Casablanca. The French control was very strict. But we saw the formidable and almost completed *Jean Bart* lying just across the quay from us, and several French cruisers and destroyers. Passengers who came aboard said there were a good many Nazi agents in Casablanca; no one knew exactly how many or what they were doing. The next night we were in Lisbon at last, and four days later I was winging westward. After seventeen months and all the places I had been and all that I had seen, America suddenly seemed tantalizingly near as I flew home from Lisbon. The home team would be waiting at LaGuardia airport. I tossed about all night on my bunk in the Clipper. I had slept under all sorts of conditions, but I simply couldn't sleep that night. This was the third time I had flown across the Atlantic in less than twenty-four hours. Who is it that says the Atlantic Ocean is three thousand miles wide?

## *Chapter 15*

### WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR?

**C**oming home from a war is like jumping from the frying-pan into the ice-box. The beets and the radishes feel awfully cool at first. The butter looks rather too hard and over-plentiful, and the lamb chops seem to sit on very complacent bottoms. As for the bacon, its sleekness and fatness is almost indecent. Yes, it feels pretty chilly inside the ice-box; welcomely cold, but wellnigh too cold for the moment—and it seems at first as if nothing much had happened to the beets or the butter or the bacon during all this time that you, a poor sausage, were sizzling on the griddle.

Coming home from a war is rather like that because the most shocking discovery, coming home from a war, is to learn how very many people really don't know that there is a war. It was like that coming into France from besieged Madrid in 1937-8. It was like that coming out of Finland, and then out of Norway, into Sweden. It was like that coming home to America in February 1941. You are possessed by a strange mixture of joy, wonderment, and uneasiness. Wonderment that life somewhere flows serenely, comfortably onward without bloodshed or blackouts. Uneasiness that such multitudes of people should appear so blissfully, almost callously oblivious of the fact that half the world is on fire and the flames are spreading day after day. It seems incredible that so many, many people can continue to devote themselves exclusively to their own little lives. You begin to wonder if there can be any greater egotism than the egotism of peace and prosperity in a war-ravaged world.

The homecomer from distant battlefields must invariably find himself in somewhat the same plight as a Puritan-souled youth with his first mistress. To taste such delights would be

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sheerest bliss were it not for a constantly recurring twinge of conscience and the memory of another discipline, another and sterner code of living. Imagine a land where everyone eats white bread, or practically everyone can eat it. Imagine being able to drink huge glasses of milk whenever the desire prompts you. Imagine being able to have bacon for breakfast, to-day and to-morrow and the day after to-morrow . . . bacon for breakfast every morning of the year if you wish. What a profligacy of plenty is here in our United States, and what a criminal waste of good and needed things you see upon every side! Yes, it is wonderful to come home from a war, but in this unappreciated abundance and in this complacent normality of ordinary living there is something which borders almost upon the obscene. After all, obscenity is not always to be found in the gutter. There can be obscenities of complacency and plenty. But peace is good, marvellously good, if only mankind could somehow learn how to be good enough for peace. If only we could learn to see, instead of to look or not to look. If we could learn to think without the goad of personal suffering. But life is a luxury when it rolls on normally. War is a fantasy until it becomes the nightmare of reality. All of which helps to explain why it can be quite confusing when at last you come home from a war.

I confess, a few days in which to visit with the home team, to rest up and achieve some gradual readjustment, would have been most welcome when I stepped off the Clipper at LaGuardia Field. During seventeen months of war-reporting I had had six days of leave after Finland and two three-day week-ends in Rumania; not a great deal by way of vacation under war-time stresses. But now I found no time in which to get my feet back on the American earth, for I had to give a lecture three hours after my arrival and two more the next day. That same evening I found myself listed to appear on a Town Meeting of the Air programme with the subject for debate: 'What issues are at stake in this war?' As I listened to two of the speakers that night, I realized that I might as well have been spending the previous seventeen months on the planet Mars. These are some of the things which I heard.

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Lawrence Dennis, described as our foremost American Fascist, declared: 'The three principal stakes in this war are the British Empire, the status quo, and international capitalism.'

(So these things were what the Poles, the Norwegians, the Dutch, the Belgians, and the Greeks had fought for. How strange that not a single citizen from any of these invaded lands had ever mentioned any of them to me! Strange, too, that all these peoples fought with the conviction they were defending their own freedom, their own political institutions, and their own right to live.)

'To-day', said Mr. Dennis, 'we are a nation trying to crawl back to the status of colonial dependence on Britain.'

(That sounded like unmitigated stupidity, if it were true. But why did Mr. Dennis fail to explain how America, an enormously rich nation of 130,000,000 people, could conceivably be reduced to a colonial appendage of an island of 40,000,000 souls—of a Great Britain which would be utterly impoverished at this war's end? Mr. Dennis did not try to explain. Instead he declared the British Empire was doomed but, despite this doom of the Empire and the Empire's alleged responsibility for the war, 'the world has to be integrated into a few large economic empires'. This reasoning reminded me that I must be the man from Mars. Perhaps I simply did not speak the language here.)

But George Sokolsky, the next speaker, gave me reassurance that I really had landed in the United States. 'The immediate problem', he asserted, 'requires us to measure our steps by the dangerous trend in the direction of totalitarian government for the United States.'

(Yes, I had heard that while covering the 1936 presidential campaign. So there wasn't a great war in Europe. The time-worn arguments of 1936 were still supposed to apply.)

'If we go to war we shall be forced to adopt some form of national socialism here in order that we might succeed in fighting National Socialism there.'

(How, I wondered, would Mr. Sokolsky explain the fact that America went to war in 1917 and remained at war for

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eighteen months, yet failed to emerge with 'some form of national socialism'?)

'National socialism might come to us from Hitler,' Mr. Sokolsky was saying, 'but it might also come to us from our own war participation.'

(Why, then, did not Adolf Hitler force the United States into the war right away? How shortsighted of Adolf to be doing his utmost to keep us out!)

'We are going to defend ourselves; we are going to defend our shores; we are going to defend our people. . . .'

(But if Britain should soon be defeated by Nazi Germany, Mr. Sokolsky, how can you be so certain that a still inadequately armed America *can* defend its shores and people? Do you think we are now in any position to defend them alone? Do you recommend that we defend ourselves the same way the Norwegians, Dutch, Belgians, and Poles defended themselves, in the smoking ruins of their own cities and towns?)

' . . . and we will lend Great Britain money, of which we have a surplus,' continued Mr. Sokolsky smoothly.

(I see. So it's just a good business proposition, is it? And this, according to Mr. Sokolsky's logic and way of thinking, 'is the best we ought to do'. We can pay the British cold cash for fighting and dying long enough so that America will have time to get fully armed, in order then to fight for herself and nothing else.)

A woman in the audience wanted to know: 'How are we going to live in the United States for the next thirty years if Hitler wins?'

Mr. Sokolsky: 'If we force our congressmen and senators to preserve constitutional government by keeping the President in his place, we live here as Americans.'

(So with Nazism now conqueror of twelve European countries and only one step from virtual world dominion, America's chief job and chief anxiety should be 'keeping the President in his place'? Imagine how that argument would impress millions of Czechs, Poles, and other European peoples who know all the pleasantries and conveniences of

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being forced to live with Hitler. Maybe Mr. Sokolsky had never heard of Norway and the Nazis' Trojan horse. Was it not curious that supposedly informed men could debate the issues of this war and ignore completely Hitler's most deadly strategic weapons of 'divide and rule' and conquest from within? Where had Mr. Sokolsky and those who applauded him been living all these months? Would they have to go to Europe and see for themselves before they would either believe or understand? Did Ralph Barnes die trying to make such people see?)

Another woman asks Mr. Dennis: 'If you read any of the books which have to do with the stories of what is going on in Europe to-day under Nazi persecution, how is it possible for you not to pass moral judgement on what is going on?'

Mr. Dennis: 'I hold to that former American belief that we have to mind our own business.'

(But if the war is none of our business, Mr. Dennis, if it does not affect the lives of all Americans, why are we here debating about it this evening? This war is already costing American taxpayers many billions of dollars. Why do we load ourselves down with taxes and debts if what the Nazis do and how they do it are no concern of ours? Will you kindly explain how the United States can remain one of the greatest and strongest nations on earth and still shut its eyes to the formidable expansion of a colossal revolutionary totalitarian system? Mr. Dennis does not explain. For him there is no moral issue in the progressive enslavement of scores of millions of human beings.)

If you have followed my experiences from the opening pages of this book I think you will understand the dazed bewilderment in which I sat through this Town Meeting of the Air. It seemed utterly inconceivable that the war which I had seen ravaging one country after another and destroying hundreds of thousands of homes and lives could be discussed on a public platform in America as a purely academic question. People here still had time, or thought they had time, to debate and argue and indulge in all sorts of irrelevancies which had nothing to do with the central issues at

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stake. What a luxury to feel able to treat the Second World War, with Britain alone holding off the tidal wave of Brown Bolshevism, as an abstract problem or as something which had no relation to the security and lives of the American people save as a casual interest in dollars and cents! If we had no more direct interest than that, why did Americans talk so much about the war? Why were they so anxious and so disturbed in their minds and hearts?

For the next two months I travelled ceaselessly across the United States from coast to coast, and during these meanderings I found the answers to these questions. The American people might be deeply divided about the war—about the lease-lend bill or about convoying or about outright participation—but the very sharpness of their divisions was the measure of their recognition that America's future security was inescapably involved in the outcome of the Second World War. Wherever I went men and women in the audiences asked questions which illuminated the groping and confusion in the prevailing American state of mind. There were many sincere interventionists and many equally sincere isolationists, but between these two opposing camps a large number of Americans were just beginning to face the facts. They did not want to see America dragged into another conflict, but they were frankly worried about what a Nazi triumph over Britain would do to their country and their lives. I told the story of Finland, of Norway, of the Nazi locusts in the Balkans, of the mountain-eating little Greeks—not all that I have told here, but as many of the essentials as could be packed into sixty or ninety minutes. Night after night I saw before me a new sea of intent and thoughtful faces. Some were believing faces and a few were disbelieving, but on a great majority of faces I saw the outward manifestations of honest and tormenting inner debate. That was worth far more than any kind of emotional demonstration. The American people, thank God, could not be ballyhooed into this war. What ought we to do and what must we do? The average American seemed to want to think the thing out for himself. He was late, dangerously late, at attempting to grasp the



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lessons of Poland, Finland, Norway, France, and all the rest. But he was beginning to think; sceptical and hesitant in his mind, but anxious for facts while wishing they were not the kind of facts they were.

I journeyed from New York to North Carolina, from Minnesota and Wisconsin to southernmost Texas, from Missouri to California and Oregon. I met a great many people, and people with many different opinions. Nevertheless, when these travels were finished, I had the firm conviction that the great majority of Americans were agreed that the United States could not afford to permit Britain to be defeated by the forces of Nazism—and that a definite majority of Americans would rather have our government run the risk of war than permit a Hitler triumph. The American people would not vote to go to war, any more than the British people would have voted to go to war at the time of Munich. But they would never vote to throw Britain to the Nazi dogs either. They were beginning to see what life in a Nazi-dominated world would mean for us. In other words, they were beginning to see what the British and their allies were really fighting for, that this was a way of living and a code of doing.

It seems long ago when President Roosevelt told the American people that the only thing we have to fear is fear. Yet that applied with just as much force to all Americans in the spring of 1941 as it did during the bank collapse of the spring of 1933. Americans were still highly nervous and excitable and susceptible to defeatism. Charles A. Lindbergh and others talked about it being 'too late'. Every new Nazi success, as with the fall of Yugoslavia or the defeat of Greece, was cited as renewed evidence that it was too late to keep Britain in the war. Somehow the voices of the defeatists, piping in the midst of a vast and powerful land, sounded shrill and pitifully empty to one who had just come home from the companionship and example of smiling, mud-covered little Greek soldiers on the Tepeleni front in Albania. What could the defeatists say that would erase the memories of Finland and Greece? What could the blackest newspaper

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headlines ever have done to the lion heart of Sammy Cooper? Who among the R.A.F. men in Greece or in Egypt had ever admitted that the battle was lost? If all these unknown soldiers of a dozen countries had fought on and on in the face of heart-breaking odds, how could any well-fed and comfortable American presume to define what is the impossible under the stress of war? Ah, but was it not always true that those who are great doubters are those who possess the luxury of too much time in which to doubt? When people know in their hearts that there is no other road, when their hearts have decided that they will fight or die, there remains no room for fear and uncertainty. The one great Certainty comes to those who accept, and gladly accept, the full price of freedom. What are we fighting for? Ask the living or the dead in those lands which fight or have fought against Nazi, Fascist, or Soviet dictation and domination. Everything becomes extraordinarily simple for those who have been so big as to accept their lives at the absolute minimum of individual value.

But we in America were not yet ready to abdicate the thrones of our separate well-fed and well-clothed egoisms. We had had a comparatively easy way of life for many years. Some of us had wallowed in prosperity and easy profits. Some of us had much less, so when hard times came the government had to take care of us. In this generation we were not brought up with the doctrine of personal sacrifice for the sake of our country. America owed us a living or a chance to become a millionaire—but *what did we owe America?* In the turmoil of anti-New-Deal denunciation and interminable quarrels between capital and labour, how seldom could be heard the voice of supreme national interest! Had not material progress been our greatest deity and ambition ever since the beginning of the 1920's? (And for how long before that?) What American political leader had ever called for sacrifice and more sacrifice during all these years? What Americans, in all this time, had distinguished themselves by announcing their willingness to do without something—without something they had become accustomed to and

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really wanted—for the sake of the common good? Why were Americans divided and dissatisfied and ill at ease in their hearts? Could the war be blamed for all of this? It seemed to me that this widespread unrest and dissension sprang from a far deeper cause than war. No, it is not the physical menace of Nazism or any other ism which threatens democracy and freedom in the United States. The greatest menace to America, and therefore the most deadly ally of Hitler's Nazism, lies in the spiritual bankruptcy which still paralyses such a large percentage of her citizens. The French were paralysed by the same thing, and so were many Swedes and Rumanians. Neither the Finns nor the Greeks nor the British have shown the slightest evidence of this catastrophic disease. Throughout the hell of battle and of bombings the flames of the spirit have burned steadily within their breasts. They have learned or long remembered a simple thing. *Not what you keep, but what you give!*

There are still a great many Americans who know that this is true. I have seen it in their faces and felt it in their handclasps. Isolationists who appeal to them on the grounds of unabashed materialism and selfishness pour their phrases upon deaf ears. But there are a great many others who, remembering the snare and illusions of the last war, persist in the assumption that this war contains no greater imperativeness or moral challenge than the other. The last war had one Belgium and this a dozen, but that makes no difference. This war is being waged by systematic degradation, blackmail, gangsterism, treason, bribery, enslavement, and civilian murders, but that also makes no difference. This war, unlike the Kaiser's militant imperialism, is the ruthless Revolution of Brown Bolshevism directed against all right to national freedoms, against all property-holders, against all free enterprise, against all creeds and the tenets of Christianity itself—but for all that it is merely another 'European squabble'. We must not 'meddle' in it, but leave the Nazis and their pro-Nazi American dupes free to meddle within our borders.

What is there familiar about this picture? Where have I

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seen these things before? Long ago when I was a correspondent in France, especially in 1934-5, these same blindnesses and false reasonings began to divide sharply all French society from top to bottom. Nazism was growing more powerful every month, but French conservatives were chiefly obsessed by their own country's Communists and radicals. Over the next few years Hitler won thousands of influential allies among the French Rightists, bankers and aristocrats and industrialists as well as politicians like Laval. More than anything else these Nazi-fostered internal divisions contributed to the eventual destruction of the Third Republic. Again in Spain the conservatives, even including the Church, became the allies of Nazis and Fascists while anarchists and other Left-wing labour leaders helped to discredit republican government with excessive strikes. The conservative Rightists precipitated the Spanish civil war, assured of Nazi-Fascist support, but Hitler and Mussolini were the only ones to reap the benefits.

Austria, too, was torn with dissension and swallowed up by Nazi totalitarianism. Czechoslovakia was too united, spiritually as well as physically, so a Munich was required to sell her people down the river. But Poland looked on and took her slice of the spoils. Then the Poles, who had refused to recognize any moral issue or any immediate personal interest in the menace of Nazism, were devastated and devoured in turn. If Czechoslovakia had still been there, things would have been very different. But Poland had refused to be her brother's keeper. In Holland and Norway I met people who insisted that isolation was the sole and sufficient guarantee of their nation's safety. They did not approve of Nazi oppression and Nazi immorality, but why should they risk involvement by interfering in other peoples' troubles? They did not interfere. They were simply invaded and crushed. The Rumanians waited and their leaders refused to fight. Now it is too late. Where and how has it been too late? Always and without exception it has been too late—for those nations which failed to seek military alliances with their natural allies while yet there was time.

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out the fatal disease of the Nazi-Fascist-Stalinist code of suppression. No nation on earth can watch freedom, morality, and honour being destroyed among its neighbours and hope to escape an equally terrible fate. If we in the United States think we can do it, and try to do it, we shall invite inevitably the fate of every nation which Nazism has conquered.

There are many among us in America who insist that this is not our fight. In an age of the radio and the airplane they would have us believe that we can live alone, even while their very debates bear witness to the fact that we do not and never shall be able to live alone again. They would compromise with gangsterism and blackmail. They would compromise with fear and terrorism, with a so-called 'New Order' based on falsehoods, slavery, robbery, and hatred of Christian principles. I have seen those who attempted this compromise and they are covered with shame; outcast and despised in their own lands and throughout the world. I have known those and lived with those who refused all compromise, and their deeds already are written into the annals of mankind with imperishable glory. There is no longer any middle way between these two roads. Either we shall take the one or we shall take the other.

Because I have seen these two things and have known these two kinds of people, I say that the American people cannot and will not take the low road of abdication and surrender. I say that we cannot and will not sell our souls as some others have done. I say that the revolutionary world in which we live to-day, even more than the nation in which Lincoln lived four score and one years ago, *cannot exist half slave and half free*. These are the issues for us as Americans. By some great and inscrutable Providence they are also the issues for all mankind.

## Chapter 16

### THE REAL MENACE TO AMERICA

ADOLF HITLER, contrasting the totalitarian and democratic worlds in a speech on 10 December 1940 said: '*We can never be reconciled with this world. . . . One of these worlds must break asunder. . . . These are two worlds, and I believe one of these worlds must crack up.*'

Since I came home from the war zones I have heard a great deal of confusing debate about how Hitler plans to attack the United States or about how impossible it would be for Hitler to conquer the U.S.A. even if he tried it. Of course, those who insist that Nazi Germany has no intention of destroying American democracy simply ignore Hitler's reiterated declarations in *Mein Kampf* and elsewhere, and persistently shut their eyes to the whole ideology which is the driving force behind the constantly enlarging revolution of Brown Bolshevism. On the other hand, many interventionists have indulged in a lot of exaggerated talk about the immediate (in contrast to long-term) danger of a German military assault against the North American continent.

Scare talk of this kind seems to me as ill-advised as the ostrich blindness of those isolationists who blithely disregard the reality of Nazi totalitarianism's goal to dominate every stronghold of the democratic world. Even if Hitler occupied the British Isles to-morrow it is extremely questionable whether his war lords would be in a position to put bombers over Newfoundland or New York in any massed onslaught before 1943, or perhaps even later. But the really vital question—the one and only all-important question—is some-

thing which all isolationists and very many interventionists in America never consider. That question is this:

*If Britain is allowed to fall, would Nazi Germany ever need to launch a military attack upon the United States in order to destroy our democratic institutions and conquer America?*

With all the seriousness at my command, and basing my judgement upon all I have seen happen in France, Holland, Norway, Rumania, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, I think it extremely improbable that Hitler (if once he conquered Great Britain) would ever find it necessary to fight in order to control the government and destiny of the United States. Hitler would concentrate upon seizing us from the inside. In fact, he has already been concentrating upon that very procedure for many years. Nazi Germany will never fight to dominate North America *unless* her Trojan-horse methods fail, or as a last paralysing stroke to unleash civil war already fully prepared within our borders and to deliver a perfectly synchronized *coup de grâce* to embattled, divided America. This is the undeviating and classical Nazi strategy of revolutionary conquest—never to employ armed force for more than blackmail purposes if the same goal can be achieved internally, subtly and secretly. Consequently, the question about the physical defence of America's shores is entirely secondary to the question of the American peoples' mental and spiritual strength. The question is not whether Hitler eventually strikes at us openly, where we can see him and his blows. Rather, the question is: Can Americans become strong enough and united enough spiritually to resist the Nazi-fostered offensive for our disintegration from within?

This was the fateful question which confronted the French, the Belgians, Dutch, Norwegians, Rumanians, and Bulgarians—but none of these people would see it. For a long time, and until the war began, the British did not see it. They came to a realization of this danger at the last minute of the eleventh hour; if they had not found a leader like Winston Churchill, they would have been too late. And note this carefully: if the British had not decided to fight, they would have been irrevocably doomed to conquest from within. Now

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millions of Americans are looking only for a physical manifestation of danger, for bombers or dreadnoughts or for an official Nazi declaration of war, and they listen to isolationist spokesmen who assure them that physical danger is the only real danger which besets us and that we can make our country into such a fortress it can never be stormed.

The senators and the other speakers of the America First Committee who preach this doctrine of the Glorified Ostrich have not been in Europe since the Second World War began. They have not been in the countries where fortresses that were supposedly impregnable were taken with astonishing ease, or where bridges inexplicably were not blown up in time, like those over the Albert Canal in Belgium. These counsellors of ostrichism conveniently neglect to mention the fact that nearly half of the European nations now dominated by Nazi Germany were conquered without firing a single machine-gun. They ignore the Trojan horse in Norway and turn their backs upon the fearfully disruptive work achieved by Nazi agents and propagandists inside Holland, Belgium, France, and other countries. In a word, the champions of isolation do not pay the slightest attention to Hitler's most devastating and most successful weapon—even though this is the weapon which reduces the Atlantic Ocean to a trickling brook by virtue of the fact that it is a weapon which can be used, wantonly and uninterruptedly, under the shielding cloak of supposedly peaceful relations.

While arguing in favour of isolation Charles A. Lindbergh, oddly enough, frankly admitted one of the chief fallacies in his own argument as long ago as 15 September 1939. He said then: 'As long as we maintain an army, a navy and an air force worthy of the name, as long as America does not decay within, we need fear no invasion of this country.' More recently Lindbergh has been beating the drums to keep America out of war and calling for a 'new leadership' and a dedication to an 'American destiny'. Why a new leadership and an American destiny? Obviously because Lindbergh is convinced that America is menaced by 'decay within'. But once he admits that this decay exists, then by his own state-



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ment Lindbergh admits that turning the United States into an armed fortress is not and cannot be enough.

Actually, whether isolationist or interventionist, Americans must admit that a serious amount of decay afflicts the morale and morality of a great many of our people to-day. It can be seen, as it could be seen in Sweden, by an excessive materialism in certain strata of our society; by the jitteriness of so many Americans' nerves; by a tendency to exaggerated defeatism whenever the war abroad takes another bad turn. This decay is evidenced by the lack of faith prevalent among so many of our American youths; by the unbridled selfishness with which so many Americans, rich or poor, put their own personal interests and pocketbooks above the welfare of the nation and the swift completion of its defences. The decay within America constitutes a great spiritual crisis; and sometimes it seems to me almost as grave as it was in France at the outbreak of the war. Before we can ever defeat Nazism we shall have to reconquer our own American soul. We shall have to cut out the abscesses of disbelief and defeatism. We shall have to force the abdication of a legion of petty and materialistic individual American egoisms. We shall have to experience a spiritual awakening and recover a militant belief, like the militant belief of the early Christians, in the humanitarian ideals for which America has always stood. We shall have to achieve all this, and perhaps at greater risk of failure than ever before. Nevertheless, by virtue of my experience in addressing audiences across the length and breadth of the United States while the lease-lend debate was at its height, I am more convinced than ever that American idealism is far from dead. The American spirit is still, but it need not be despaired of. To be truly American is still to have faith in the future. For a long time the American conscience has been slumbering, but already it is coming awake.

Defeatism is denial of the human spirit and its capacities; yet denial of the human spirit is an un-American phenomenon. To assert to-day that Britain and America combined cannot defeat Nazism, merely because the Germans have taken Yugoslavia or Greece or Egypt, is more than mere

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defeatism. It is a denial of all the spiritual lessons of this war; denial of the spirit which kept Madrid unconquered for more than two years after the defeatists had declared that Madrid was lost: denial of the spirit which defended Warsaw with amazing fortitude for weeks which otherwise should have been days; denial of the three and a half months' miracle of Finland and the seven months' miracle of Greece. Defeatism on the part of American citizens to-day is also denial of an astounding miracle which has already entered its second year in the British Isles. Such kind of denial of the inestimable powers of the human spirit, already repudiated again and again by the most immortal exploits of this war, comes with ill grace from citizens of the mightiest industrial nation on earth. Had the Poles, the Finns, the Serbs, or the Greeks possessed half of our physical resources and manpower, what would they not have done to the totalitarian aggressors? 'The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.'

Having faced this fact and having admitted that the first great battle which the American people must fight and win is a spiritual battle in their own hearts and lives, I think we can then face the future with calm and confidence. We shall not ask for an easy way. We shall no longer be blinded by materialism and personal appetites. We shall live by those things for which we are ready to die. We shall accept the necessity of self-sacrifice as it once was accepted by the soldiers of 1776 and 1860 and 1917. But we must recognize and know, far better than any who belonged to these past generations, that the home front will be the most decisive front in our struggle to defeat Nazism and maintain the freedom of our democratic institutions. *Unless we win at home, our armed men will never be victorious, wherever they may fight.*

That is why the American people must not commit the fatal error of regarding this war, approaching this war, and entering this war from a viewpoint which is primarily militaristic—a mere matter of spending the most money and building the most airplanes, guns, tanks, and ships. We can do all that and still it is possible that it will not be enough. Isolationists and interventionists alike tend to think of making

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America secure, according to their own doctrines, in terms of armaments. France tried that for twenty-two years—and look at France to-day! The enthronement of a 'Maginot Line' psychology in the United States will eventually assure Americans of just about as much protection. Stupendous armaments alone will never neutralize the terribly organized and efficient Nazi practices of Revolution, of the Brown Bolshevism which operates from within.

For this reason I think we must ask ourselves another question. Let us assume that Great Britain, for lack of unqualified and decisive American intervention, has been defeated by Nazi Germany or has been forced into a so-called peace which sets up a Nazi puppet government in London. Either eventuality would amount to the same thing. In such an event, therefore—

*Is it possible for the United States to stand alone?*

Of course, this is the assumption of all American isolationists. Unless it is most carefully documented, it is one of the most dangerous assumptions in the world, rather like the assumption that a man can live with a leper without contracting leprosy. So let us be factual. Let us guide ourselves by what Nazism is, how it has always operated, and how it has operated most successfully. With these things in mind we will now assume that Hitler has complete control of the British Isles (by whatever course and for whatever reasons), and the American nation finds itself suddenly as isolated as the most diehard isolationist could conceivably dream or imagine. With Hitler having breakfast in Buckingham Palace, London, what would be the effect upon the American government and the American people?

Unquestionably we should call about twice as many millions of men to the colours as were in our armed services when Britain fell. Within two months Congress would vote ten or twenty more billions of dollars for defence, and many more billions in the course of the first year. When that first year ended, the United States would probably have a standing army of anywhere from five million to eight million men, and perhaps more. We'd simply have to do it. You can't

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make first-class soldiers in one year—and the combined armies of Germany, Italy, and Japan would total fifteen or twenty million men. We should now also be forced to build and maintain a stupendous fleet and air force. America would become and remain a colossal armed camp for years and years. What all this would do to America's standard of living and to American taxes is almost inconceivable; for unless the Berlin-Rome-Tokio axis attacked us quite soon, we should face years and years of absolutely crippling expenditures. American citizens who are now taxed ten per cent of their income would have to be taxed thirty or forty per cent; those who are now taxed twenty per cent of their income would be taxed fifty per cent or more. I wonder how long it would be before a taxpayers' revolt would sweep across the U.S.A.? Or how much trouble Nazi agents and pro-Nazis would have in promoting such a revolt? Naturally, there would be only one slogan for such a movement: 'Disarm and slash taxes—and co-operate with Nazi Germany!' Whether or not they know it to-day, this is what the Wheelers, Nyes, Clarks, Lindberghs, and many others would be crying to-morrow.

Yes, standing alone would inevitably mean financial ruin and incalculable social distress for America. Isolationists never talk about this alternative, so they never have to attempt to explain how it could possibly be avoided if the United States were left without a single powerful democratic ally anywhere in the world. To-day they are careful not to discuss appeasement and outright co-operation with Hitlerism; but that would be their only logical next step once Britain had fallen. Very few of them would be apt to submit willingly to turning over forty or sixty per cent of their incomes to the government for the next ten years, simply to produce arms and support a gigantic war machine capable of fulfilling their promises that 'we in America can be so strong nobody will dare touch us'. Ah, but that kind of strength would require such self-sacrifice as Americans have never dreamed of, and where it always hurts human beings the most—in their pocketbooks. Perhaps it would be a great

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deal cheaper and safer to fight at the side of the British, to go the limit and keep fighting and so have done with Nazism, once and for ever, within another two or three years.

In any case let us suppose that Britain has fallen and Hitler is in Buckingham Palace, and America goes frantically to work building super-armies and a super-navy and a super-air-fleet. Hitler doesn't attack us right away. He's got too much undigested territory to do that. So we produce weapons until we can put sixteen-inch howitzers, shoulder to shoulder, from Maine to Florida and from the state of Washington down to Mexico. Suppose we can put forty- and sixty-ton tanks, shoulder to shoulder, behind them; and flying fortresses behind them. In a world where the Nazis and the Japanese controlled all the other continents, do you think America would be safe then? I don't. I know we should still live in mortal danger.

Why? Because not all the howitzers, tanks, and flying fortresses and battleships that American industry can conceivably build will ever protect America from *political syphilis*—and Nazism is nothing less than political syphilis. Everywhere that I have been in Europe the lesson has been the same. The military power of Hitlerism is one of its least dangerous aspects. Any great industrial nation like the United States can fight anybody's armies and air fleets. You can see armies and airplanes, and you know when they get near you or when you get near them. The spirochete of syphilis is invisible to the naked-eye. So is the spirochete of Nazism, and that is why we Americans are courting destruction if we think the Nazis' armed forces are their most powerful weapon or the chief thing we should concern ourselves about. Hitler has conquered at least *twelve* countries, first and foremost, *from the inside*. If we are to have any hope of escaping Europe's fate, we must think of Nazism as political syphilis—a disease that recognizes no national boundaries and a germ that is constantly circulating within our own American society. You cannot destroy a social disease with guns or bombs or battleships. Once the Nazi ideology is victorious over all of Europe and Africa, its 'carriers' will descend upon

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all the Americas, north and south, in unprecedented hordes. They are already among us, and dangerously effective even to-day, but these Nazi carriers are merely the advance activists. If Hitler is permitted to defeat Britain, thereby becoming master of all Europe and Africa and parts of Asia Minor, he will very shortly name his own dictators throughout Latin America. Having committed itself to a British-Allied and democratic victory, the prestige of the United States would be as cheap and discoloured as dishwater in all Latin-American countries. At such a moment the American people would have something infinitely more desperate than a mere armament race on their hands. Could we possibly hope to remain free?

Perhaps you will forgive me if I take time out to make an immodest confession. In November 1933, after a two months' study of the new Nazi régime in Germany, I wrote a book. It was quite small; in fact, its first English edition had only ninety-seven pages. It was published in America early in 1934, and it had a quite phenomenal success. It actually sold about six hundred copies in the entire United States of America! The name of that book was *Nazi Means War*. But in 1934 people in Britain, France, America, and Scandinavia, where editions were published, simply didn't want to believe that this was true.

So I do not expect that you will necessarily place credence in what I am now going to say. Nevertheless I am utterly convinced it needs terribly to be said—to be weighed and to be taken into account. . . . Could we in America possibly hope to remain free? . . . This is my opinion: if Germany defeats Britain, and the Nazis and the Japanese become the masters of the rest of the world, I would be willing to stake my life upon it that little short of a miracle would save us from having a Nazi form of dictatorship in America within five years and probably within three years. I think that American democracy would be destroyed and replaced by government along Nazi ideological lines—not by invasion, but *from the inside*. I believe this would be done by persons of American citizenship, by an American Nazi movement and an Ameri-

can Nazi revolution masquerading under some completely innocuous and diabolically deceptive American-sounding name. I believe we might have about one chance out of fifty of escaping that fate, if Britain should be allowed to fall.

I say these things with the utmost solemnity and without any melodramatics or emotionalism. I say them as a political realist, and as a foreign correspondent whose interpretative record over a period of fifteen years has achieved a certain reputation for reliability, soundness, and accuracy. I say them especially as one who has seen the carriers of Nazism's political syphilis operating with stupefying success in one European country after another. I say it as one who, unlike so many of our American isolationists, insists that the lessons of Nazi success lie in the record of Nazi operations itself; as one who speaks from actual and intimate experience with Nazi tactics. I say it as one who knows that nineteenth-century assumptions of American inviolability are the most perilous anachronisms any people could possibly rely upon in our modern world. I say it also as one who remembers that the other kind of syphilis crossed the Atlantic Ocean, even in the days of Christopher Columbus.

If I were an alarmist I should have made speeches across the country warning that Hitler would come over and invade America within eighteen months or two years. That, however, would be to underestimate grossly the intelligence and cunning of Nazi strategists—and to ignore the effective activities of those American organizations and groups which already serve Hitler's ends, wittingly or unwittingly. On the record of all the Nazis have done and their super-Bolshevistic technique of internal penetration, I don't think they would have to invade us. It is infinitely cheaper and simpler to fan class hatreds and labour controversies and a spirit of revolt against constitutional *and elected* government within the United States. From division to confusion, from confusion to violence, from violence in political meetings and labour rallies to revolutionary *coup d'état*. This is precisely the method by which Hitler and his National Socialists fought their way to power and overthrew the Weimar Republic

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against the desire of a clear majority of the German people.

Let us revert to the picture of Britain fallen and America transformed into an armed camp. Would Americans then be united, confident, self-sacrificing, and spiritually strong? Or would they act and sound more like Vichy Frenchmen? Would our defeatists suddenly become optimists, even in the face of the greatest triumphant war machine the world has ever seen? What do you think the 'too late' boys would be saying then? Would they be saying: 'Sure, we can defeat the Nazi-Fascists and the Japanese all alone'? What would be the reaction upon our practical businessmen? Fritz Thyssen once fell for Hitlerism and so did French and British industrialists and bankers. The stockmarket mentality is amazingly practical, so it naturally opposes almost anything that is 'bad for business'. Can't you imagine how many of our practical businessmen would begin to say: 'Well, those people are successful, and besides they put the Russians in their place. We can't go on for ever in America paying these gigantic taxes. National defence is eating up all our profits. Let's be sensible. Let's make a deal with them.' Joseph P. Kennedy, former American ambassador to Great Britain, could declare in May 1941 that 'it is nonsense to say an Axis victory spells ruin for us'. Mr. Kennedy favoured appeasement of Nazism at the moment Britain and France decided to fight. If he preached appeasement for the Allies then, what kind of appeasement would he and many other influential graduates of Wall Street now recommend?

With the U.S.A. isolated as never before in her history, imagine the anxieties and also the temptations of powerful industrial leaders whose corporations have flourished on world trade for years. Nazi spokesmen would be promising them a cut on the world markets . . . 'provided you co-operate with the New Order and get the right kind of government in Washington'. After all, these industrialists have been bedevilled with labour disputes and with A.F. of L. and C.I.O. strikes. 'Hitler got rid of all this strike business, simply by suppressing all labour unions. How can we have unions in America and still compete with Germany? Why, don't



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we get rid of labour troubles once and for all?' Then there are Ford and General Motors and other American corporations which were so rash as to invest millions of dollars in plants built in Germany. Naturally, they would like to recover those huge investments somehow. Some of Hitler's lullaby men would be crooning them a formula telling precisely how that could be done—obviously, by more 'co-operation'.

Meanwhile, Americans of all classes would be much poorer than they had ever been before and they would be hunting for objects of their disillusionment and wrath. Anti-Semitism would sweep the country, avidly encouraged by Nazi propaganda. The political refugees in our midst could easily be blamed for all sorts of things. With unemployment growing steadily as American trade diminished, some eleven million American Negroes would be discriminated against more than at any time in the past. Intolerance would mount on every side. As once in Germany and Austria and as in 'Vichy' France later on, somebody would have to be the goat. How many speeches would be made across the land calling upon 'one-hundred-per-cent Americans' to 'put these people in their place'?

These are not imaginary developments, for the same kind of developments ushered Fascism into Italy and Nazism into Germany. But Hitler's triumph would tremendously accelerate such an evolution inside the United States because all the perfected force of Nazi propaganda would be thrown into high gear against us—and us alone. As soon as Hitler had dictated peace to all Europe, the real invasion of America would begin in earnest. Nazi ships would swamp our ports bringing confident, victorious German Nordics—the 'salesmen' and 'tourists' and Nazi advance agents who know every aspect of their cleverly selected jobs. Our largest American cities would be flooded with Hitler's salesmen, adepts at selling political ideas as a provisional clause to goods which they offered at bargain prices. What would they be saying? Exactly what I heard them say as they sold the 'New Order' through the Balkan countries: 'We Germans are the masters

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of Europe and Africa, and our system is destined to rule the world. Democracy is an outmoded luxury. Ours is the wave of the future. Perhaps you Americans are strong, but we have all the industries and resources of Europe and the Near East organized behind us. You can't possibly compete with us. The inferior races work for us for whatever we want to pay them. We can undersell you in every market. You're dying from foolish and unnecessary taxes. You can avoid all this by being sensible and "co-operating" with us. Get a government like ours and your troubles will be over.'

In this kind of tax-strangled America sliding to depression the advance agents of Nazism could not fail to win scores of thousands of converts among our strategic upper classes. The 'too-laters' and the 'play-it-safers' would be looking for any conceivable excuse to avoid the possibility of war, alone, with Germany. So would those who put their pocketbooks ahead of their country. So would those who have long hated the Jews or the Negroes or the Poles or some other racial group in our land. Here, as everywhere else, Nazi apologists would appeal to every base instinct and greedy appetite which human beings can have. They would exploit well-intentioned people, excite religious intolerance, and probably still persist in declaring that Communists were the one and only menace to Americans. They would flatter the weak and buy those who could be corrupted. But most of all, Hitler's agents would concentrate upon capturing big men in key positions—big men who are haunted by fear or consumed by avarice and ambition—leaders in industry, in banking, in politics, in journalism, and in our own defence forces. A simple repetition of what has succeeded so well from one end of Europe to the other—'Divide—and rule!'

The unconscious carriers of Nazism are far more dangerous to American democracy and freedom than those groups or individuals who openly admit their Nazi sympathies. We all know that the Bundists and their like can never change our form of government through their own strength. But the unconscious carrier of political syphilis is something else. He may be a respected citizen who merely insists we must be

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'practical' because we've got to live with Hitler. He may be merely a yes-man or a confirmed bandwagon climber. He may simply be possessed with hatred of the Jews and be determined to do anything against them, no matter how nicely that fits into the Nazi game. The Ku Klux Klan or the Silver Shirts would suit Adolf Hitler equally well. In addition, there are all sorts of organizations in the United States which promote or tend to promote social animosities and unrest. The Christian Front, the Coughlinites, and the Christian Mobilizers are only a few among many such groups. But no observer who has watched Europe's disintegration for the past fifteen years can overlook the fact that we now have in America a new phenomenon: the phenomenon of semi-political organizations which label themselves 'Christian' after a fashion long practised by certain political parties in Europe. This has never been an American practice. It is borrowed from European politics and it tends to introduce religious divisions into American politics. These developments are identical with those which the Nazis have capitalized in Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere. We can be certain they know how to capitalize them with equally dissension-spreading efficiency in the Western Hemisphere.

Only the wishful thinker can possibly assume that a Hitler conquest of Britain would leave America immune to tremendous psychological and moral pressure from victorious Nazism. With our present American disunity and spiritual uncertainty vastly accentuated, a dangerous proportion of the American people could not fail to be highly receptive to the Nazis' paralysing technique of conversion and corruption. This, in all soberness, is the greatest menace to America and her free, democratic institutions. We must face this menace and we must begin by realizing that in its essence it is revolutionary. This is the undeclared war—the war which will be waged against us so long as Nazism exists.

In October 1940 I happened to meet a Spanish diplomat at a dinner party in a Balkan capital. His name and family are very prominent in Falangist circles in Franco's Spain

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and he had never made any secret of his pro-Nazi sympathies. On this particular evening, however, the Falangist-Nazi Spaniard had indulged in a considerable amount of wine and spirits, so he was more than ordinarily talkative.

'I know your Mr. Roosevelt will be re-elected,' he said to me. 'But that won't make any difference. Before the year 1942 is finished the United States will have the greatest revolution the world has ever seen. Roosevelt will never complete his term—that's sure.'

The Spanish diplomat's face was dark with hatred as he spoke. Then he began to laugh with an unpleasant, mocking laughter.

'Yes, the stupid people in the democracies are always talking about the Communist menace. They don't understand what our totalitarian systems are all about. Why, beside us the Soviets are just a bunch of pinks. Property means nothing whatever to us. And when you have your revolution in America it won't mean a thing there, either.'

It seemed to me of considerable interest that the Spanish Falangists, as well as the Nazis and Fascists, were frankly counting upon the destruction of American democracy by means of revolution, rather than invasion, and within the space of two or three years. It seemed particularly interesting that a highly placed Falangist, while admitting that President Roosevelt could not be defeated at the polls in November 1940, nevertheless should predict confidently that Americans would remove him by forceful means before his term of office expired.

'Beside us the Soviets are just a bunch of pinks.'

Of course, it did no harm for the Spanish diplomat to avow that openly. He knew perfectly well that most Americans, despite the long and terrible list of the Nazis' unprovoked aggressions and the brutality with which they have suppressed one nation after another, would like to think there is only one Bolshevism and that its colour is red. In one respect at least Hitler has been far more brilliant than Lenin. He alone has known how to enlist capitalists (bankers and steel magnates and automobile-manufacturers and all

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kinds of property-owners) to help to destroy capitalism. The Spanish Falangist thought it quite a joke. 'Property means nothing whatever to us.' Maybe he was also thinking of the Nazi-Falangist alliance which would proceed to the conquest of all Latin-American countries as soon as Hitler had fulfilled his pledge to invade Great Britain. But the thing he was anticipating with the keenest delight was the coming American revolution, which would be 'the greatest revolution the world has ever seen'.

To the average American to-day that would undoubtedly seem a fantastic prophecy. Unless, of course, someone was talking about a Communist-inspired revolution inside the United States. The great majority of our citizens have nourished the fear of Communism for more than twenty years. Thus we are peculiarly responsive to all evidences of the 'Red menace'. We Americans are indeed the most 'Red-minded' people in the world. But supposing someone wanted to start a revolution in the United States in the name of suppressing all danger of Communism? . . . Who was it first used that potent pretext for staging a revolution? Mussolini and his Blackshirts in Italy. And who used that same pretext with such diabolical cleverness that torrents of blood have been unleashed upon more than one-fourth of the world's population? Hitler and the Nazis. Their anti-Communist pose was one of their most effective weapons for undermining and destroying France, a nation which possessed 'the best professional army in the world'. Thanks to their consuming fear of Communism, Hitler enlisted countless influential French capitalists as his allies, for the final downfall of France. Who but the blind can doubt that Hitler's agents will employ—are already employing—the same tactics in America?

It must be clear to any thoughtful person that there is a revolutionary menace inside the United States to-day, and that this menace has many more strings to it than those which come from Moscow. Communists may be and may remain a problem in America, but they do not possess great wealth and power in high places. A so-called anti-Communist revolution is the only kind which would have real

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prospects of succeeding in our country in the next few years. In our present great war-time crisis those who continue to denounce President Roosevelt as a 'dictator' and those who bitterly repudiate the verdict of our last presidential elections are consciously or unconsciously sowing the seeds of conceivable conspiracy and revolt. Our present disunity over America's role in the Second World War inevitably heightens the animosities and deepens those social cleavages from which civil violence so easily springs. This, of course, is what the Nazi revolutionaries of Brown Bolshevism are counting upon. Now that they can pose as the crusaders who attacked Soviet Russia in order to destroy its power for ever, they confidently expect to gain numerous and powerful allies among American conservatives and Right-wing reactionaries. If they succeed in gaining much more of this kind of support inside the United States, their hopes for the conquest of America from within will be well founded and dangerously high.

I have seen the ferment of revolution in King Alfonso's Spain and accurately forecast the outbreak of the republican revolution which swiftly followed. I have also seen the ferment of totalitarian counter-revolution in Spain. I have seen the entrenchment of the Nazi revolution in Germany and have watched the tinders of Left-wing and Right-wing revolutionary movements spread in France. In the course of these experiments you come to recognize the kind of political and social divisions from which revolts against established, legal governments invariably emerge. These divisions exist and are growing in America to-day. We are blind if we do not see them for what they are and for the national catastrophe which they may ultimately produce.

But it is not too late to prevent such a tragedy. If we see the gravity of this danger we shall unite. We shall unite against all despotism and all international gangsterism. But to accomplish this new union of the American people we must recognize, here and now, that either compromise or co-operation with Nazism—that most gigantic and powerful and anti-Christian of all present international gangsterisms—will inevitably expose the United States to internal de-

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**struction. We must unite in repudiation of and resistance to the Attila of the twentieth century. This is the only road to America's safety, as it is the only road to freedom for people anywhere in our time.**

## *Chapter 17*

### WHAT KIND OF AMERICAN LEADERSHIP?

**I** have just finished a tour of American defence plants in Hartford, Buffalo, Detroit, Cleveland, and other key industrial centres. I have also just finished reading a file of isolationist speeches made by Charles A. Lindbergh since the Second World War began. These experiences have been informative and enlightening, each in its own way, but the contrasts are indeed great. It is surprising to discover that Mr. Lindbergh apparently knows much less about the swiftly rising productive capacity of our aviation industry than any reporter can learn in a few days of careful investigation on the spot. Perhaps that is not so surprising, however, when you search all the available Lindbergh speeches in vain for any scientific data or authoritative statistics to substantiate the sweeping generalities in which they abound. You get the impression that the Lindbergh defeatism is defeatism de luxe; that it can scarcely afford to be bothered with a painstaking presentation of even the most relevant facts. This makes it all the more important to examine closely some of Mr. Lindbergh's favourite and most striking statements.

Speaking in St. Louis on 4 May 1941, Mr. Lindbergh declared: 'The claim that the American and British production of aircraft will soon excel German production is not true. . . . The idea that England, with our assistance, can equal Germany's strength in the air by 1942 or 1943 is a complete fallacy. . . . Germany has a head start and from the standpoint of research and production alone it will require years to overtake her. No matter how many planes we build in America and send to England we cannot make the British Isles stronger than Germany in military aviation.'



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These are extremely categorical statements; so much so that one might expect Lindbergh to support them with a convincing amount of documentary evidence. In the same address, however, it was equally astonishing that he should assert: 'We have unlimited natural resources. . . . We have the most highly organized industry in the world.' If this is true, why is it impossible for the United States *and* Great Britain to equal Germany's strength in military aviation 'no matter how many planes we build'?

In the course of the war correspondents' tour of our defence plants we saw the extraordinary job which America's aviation industry is doing and we obtained the testimony of men who are not pilots but experts in production management. One of these chief executives, with more than twenty years of practical experience behind him, was Frederick B. Rentschler, chairman of the board of United Aircraft Corporation, which manufactures the world-famous Pratt & Whitney airplane engines. I asked Mr. Rentschler whether he believed it possible for American and British aircraft production to equal or surpass that of Nazi-dominated Europe. Here is his reply:

'There is no question in my mind that, given the necessary materials, we not only can match *the entire production of continental Europe but exceed it*. With the increasing activity of our automotive plants and employing complete facilities, given the materials there is almost no limit to what we can produce here.'

Mr. Rentschler looked forward to the attainment of Anglo-American supremacy in production of fighting aircraft as an assured development, and he pointed out that he was taking full account of French and Italian as well as German manufacturing facilities. At the Curtiss-Wright plant in Buffalo, where Curtiss Tomahawks are rolling off the assembly lines and where other heavily armed pursuit planes have already been perfected, we found officials equally confident. In Buffalo I asked the same question of Lawrence D. Bell, president of Bell Aircraft Corporation, which produces the terrifically powerful flying arsenal that is known as the Airacobra.

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'I don't think there's the slightest question that we can surpass German industry,' said Mr. Bell. 'For that matter we can do it all by ourselves, without the British. But if you mean American and British output together . . . well, that's something for Hitler to worry about, and before long he'll have plenty to worry about.'

It seemed to me that the testimony of these executives, who are making America's engines and airplanes, carried a great deal more authority than the blanket assertions of a former commercial pilot who is now engaged in a feverish campaign for isolationism. If anyone can reliably judge the relative productive capacities of Germany and the United States, surely the men who make the planes and engines ought to know. These same men were not promising to perform miracles overnight, even though they have already done a simply amazing thing in plant construction and expansion in the past year. Moreover, they talk in facts and figures, so that a reporter can get his teeth into something besides mere words. Here is a thought-provoking example:

In June 1941, the month of our inspection tour, the three large firms already building airplane engines for Britain and the United States were United Aircraft, the Wright Aeronautical Corporation, and the Allison division of General Motors. As of this same month their total production amounted to more than 3,300,000 horse-power in engines per month. (Although official figures were not released, this would probably provide engines for nearly 2,000 airplanes—or a considerable surplus margin over our American military production of 1,334 airplanes in May 1941.) Nevertheless, the interesting point is this: American correspondents and other observers, after spending the first eighteen or twenty months of the war in Germany, are agreed that the German production of aircraft was probably about 1,700 planes monthly (as of May and June) and could scarcely have exceeded 2,000 planes—which would be nearly equivalent to 3,000,000 horse-power in engines. For the sake of liberality some of these observers were willing to grant the possibility that Germany might be turning out over 4,000,000 horse-power in engines.

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At this time these are the closest estimates available for contrast with what American aircraft plants are actually doing. They illustrate strikingly that in airplane-engine production America alone, without consideration of British high-powered activity, had already equalled or nearly equalled that of Nazi Germany. Beyond this there are further facts of vastly greater significance. By next spring new airplane-engine plants, now being completed by the three existing manufacturers and by Ford, Buick, and Chevrolet, will have so greatly increased our facilities that American production will exceed 10,000,000 horse-power per month—whereas the limit of existing German plant capacity is placed at several million horse-power below this figure.

Do these statistics and actual American accomplishments coincide in any particular with Mr. Lindbergh's sweeping assertion, unfortified by a single scientific fact, that the idea of the United States and Britain equalling Germany's strength in the air by 1942 or even by 1943 'is a complete fallacy'? Are not the American people entitled to something more solid and authoritative than generalities of this kind? And once again, if we have 'unlimited natural resources' and 'the most highly organized industry in the world', how can Lindbergh claim that such an industry—far outside the paralysing reach and retardative influence of bombers and blackouts—cannot surpass Germany in aircraft production? Is Lindbergh basing his isolationist appeals upon hard facts? Or is he basing them upon a one-sided and irresponsible kind of emotionalism?

I am convinced that these are fair questions; and particularly that they need to be addressed to anyone who declares that the war 'was lost by England and France even before it was declared and that it is not within our power in America to-day to win the war for England—even though we throw the entire resources of our nation into the conflict'. From the beginning Lindbergh has claimed that Germany possessed such overwhelming superiority in the air it was useless to resist her. If the Nazis possessed such overwhelming superiority in aviation, why did not Hitler occupy the British Isles

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in September 1940, as he had promised to do? Why did the Nazis lose 562 planes over England between August 8 and October 6 of that year? And why did their attacks fall off sharply for six months afterward? Mr. Lindbergh, most noticeably, has never attempted to answer any of these questions.

If the Nazis were hopelessly all-powerful in their air force, why did their aerial assaults upon Britain immediately drop incomprehensibly when Germany was invading Yugoslavia and Greece? And again when German parachutists were battling for Crete? And again when Hitler launched his attack upon Soviet Russia? Why did Hitler, in his proclamation to the German people at that moment, accuse the British and Russians of planning to tie up 'such powerful forces in the east that a radical conclusion of the war in the west' (obviously meaning invasion of the British Isles), '*particularly as regards aircraft*, could no longer be vouched for by the German high command'? This is Hitler's own public admission that his air force was not big enough and strong enough to be thrown all-out against Britain and still maintain necessary units along Germany's eastern borders and throughout the Balkans. Why has Lindbergh never recognized these unquestionable indications that the Nazi air force does not enjoy overwhelming superiority over the British? Why, indeed, does he steadfastly refrain from discussing the actual performance record of the German and the British aviation in this war? Is it not strange that a man who is willing to speak as a supposed authority on the relative strength of military air forces never discusses what pursuit planes and bombers have actually accomplished in this war to date?

In what I write here I am not questioning for a moment Mr. Lindbergh's sincerity as an isolationist. On the record of his public utterances I am questioning Mr. Lindbergh's judgement—most particularly his judgement about numerous aspects of war-time aviation. My attention has been focused upon this extremely important loophole in the Lindbergh thesis because I happen to be a war correspondent, and Mr. Lindbergh fails completely to discuss or consider many angles of the aerial war which virtually every war

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correspondent knows from personal experience and observation. It seems most disquieting and unjustified that a man should pronounce America and Britain hopelessly inferior in military aviation to-day without bothering to discuss either the relative merits already demonstrated in combat warfare or the enormously rising aircraft production which is already assured in America within one year. Production capacity certainly has a great deal to do with who will or can win the war in the air. And the matter of *how planes and pilots now perform in aerial combat* is something which no responsible military officer or newspaper correspondent would ignore for a moment. If these all-dominant factors are ignored by foremost champions of American isolation, they are dodging the central key to the entire problem, and they are failing to inform—or attempt to inform—the American people. Let me offer a single striking example of Mr. Lindbergh's delinquency in this respect. It illustrates perfectly the fact that you cannot measure aviation strength in war-time by a slide-rule from a distance of several thousand miles.

I was in Greece in November 1940, when the Greeks were fighting desperately to take the last mountain range in front of Koritsa. They were stopped in their tracks for several days because the Italians sent hundreds of planes, machine-gunning their troops, and the Greeks had virtually no aviation with which to fight back. The first R.A.F. fighter squadron arrived from Egypt and sped northward. Nine British Gladiators went up over the Koritsa front. The Gladiators were five or six years old, just about the oldest pursuit planes being used anywhere in the war; and they went up into an aerial sector which was filled with scores of Fiat 42's, which the British themselves admitted to be one of the newest and best fighter models as yet active on any front. Within forty minutes the old Gladiators shot down eleven Fiat 42's—and not a single one of the nine Gladiators was lost. Koritsa was taken by the Greeks the next day.

This is *performance*—aerial performance in war-time. Yet there is not the slightest indication in any of Lindbergh's speeches that he knows anything about repeated incidents of

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this kind; that he even recognizes their existence, or that such accomplishments have an extremely vital bearing upon the turn of the tide in aerial warfare. The deadly performance of outmoded Gladiators against numerically superior and modern Fiat 42's was no isolated incident; rather it became an almost routine occurrence throughout the war in Greece. Some may object that this was achieved against Italian rather than German pilots. But it so happens that R.A.F. fighters have consistently outclassed the best Nazi planes over England and France ever since the first aerial blitz was attempted against the British Isles. The superiority of British airplanes and British pilots is admitted by every American aviation officer who has observed the war on the spot. It is one of the biggest reasons why the Blitz of September 1940 failed completely. This superiority in performance of men and planes the British have demonstrated again and again. That is one of the great aerial lessons of this war—and Lindbergh scrupulously avoids mention of its existence. Can it be that much of Lindbergh's extreme defeatism about British chances for victory is based upon this kind of wilful blindness to realities? Why, indeed, does Mr. Lindbergh dodge coming to grips with the facts of aerial warfare in this Second World War?

Once again, I believe this is a perfectly fair question. And in turn it raises another question: How can any man hope to speak with authority about the relative strength *and effectiveness* of two opposing air forces if he has never gone to a war and has never seen aerial combat, with all its excessive strain upon men and machines, at first hand? This is in no sense a reflection upon Mr. Lindbergh's courage. Rather it is a challenge in regard to certain of his qualifications for judgement, and especially for judgement which is voiced in sweeping, categorical terms. Wars and battles are not won by machines alone. They are won by *men* with machines. It was the men, more even than the machines, who cleared the air over Dunkirk so that the British expeditionary forces could escape to their home shores. You do not learn the astonishing margin of human performance and the extra-

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ordinary part it plays in turning the tide of battles until you have been to a war and seen it happen again and again as I have seen it happen in Spain, Finland, Greece, and Albania. Moreover, there is a vast difference between the experience, training, and knowledge of the captain of a passenger liner like the *Queen Mary* and that of the present commander of the American super-dreadnought, the *North Carolina*. We may confidently assume, I suspect, that the same difference exists between a commercial airline pilot, however skilled, and a wing commander of the R.A.F. or the German air force. Prolonged or intense *military* training and active combat experience unquestionably constitute some of the most essential qualifications for anyone who would presume to speak a final word about the relative fighting abilities of British and German aviation.

My own experiences with aviation are strictly amateur, but I have acquired a deep respect for the war-time flier; and I know he knows a great many important things that the peace-time flier has never been obliged to consider. Nevertheless a war correspondent learns a few things from observation on the spot. Within less than one year I have been under Soviet bombers, under Nazi bombers, and under Fascist bombers, meanwhile accumulating a fair quota of escapes from all three. I have seen the men who went up to fight these bombers. I have been in a number of their planes. I have seen them fight; have seen them shoot down planes and seen them shot down in turn. In the course of these experiences, scattered in all four corners of Europe from Spain to Finland and from Norway to Greece, I have learned that skill and morale is often the decisive factor in aerial combat and that fighting hearts are one of the greatest assets of any air force. This is why it seems utterly incomprehensible to me that Mr. Lindbergh so completely ignores the human factor in his slide-rule assessments of air strength in this war. This is why I am compelled to conclude that in some important respects he is certainly no more an authority on war-time military aviation and its performance achievements than the average American war correspondent—and probably con-

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siderably less an authority than some of those in England to-day. If one would talk with convincing authority about war machines it is a useful thing to have seen a great deal of them in action. Nor can any person who knows war leave entirely out of consideration the greatest and most fateful intangible of all—the role of human beings.

There is another contention of Mr. Lindbergh which commands notice. 'It is physically impossible,' he says, 'to base enough aircraft in the British Isles alone to equal in strength the aircraft that *can* [italics mine] be based on the continent of Europe.' This sounds like a serious problem until you analyse the Lindbergh statement. He does not say it is impossible to base sufficient airplanes in the British Isles to equal the air force which Nazi Germany actually has, or even can hope to build. He merely refers to a hypothetical aircraft strength (belonging to whom and to how many powers and of what exact size?—all unanswered questions) which *can* be based on the European continent. Naturally, you can pour more wine into five kegs than you can pour into one, providing you have plenty of wine or possess sufficient vineyards in which to grow grapes. But why does Lindbergh fail to offer any precise figures about the number of airplanes that can be accommodated in Britain? Perhaps because he has not been in the British Isles since before the war, and because the British have built a very great number of airfields since the war began, and because the British authorities—for some inexplicable reason—have not been supplying any facts of this nature to Charles A. Lindbergh. Therefore, since our foremost isolationist does not begin to know the size and number of airfields in the British Isles to-day, one wonders how he can estimate how many aircraft they can accommodate. If he means that Great Britain, this year or next, cannot possibly base 100,000 airplanes in the British Isles you may confidently reply that Nazi Germany also cannot possibly base 100,000 aircraft on the continent of Europe during this same period—for the simple reason that neither Britain nor Germany possesses or will possess anything like that number of planes.



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Once again Mr. Lindbergh appears to be creating a bugaboo instead of keeping his feet on the ground. If the British Isles do not possess adequate airfields or room for airfields for all the planes the British can hope to obtain and operate over the next two or three years, that calls for demonstration by hard facts. None of the high American aviation officers who have served by the dozen as observers in Britain since the war began have ever given any indication that such facts exist. No American correspondent returned from London has ever reported the existence of such a problem for any discernible future. On the contrary, one of the latest to return (James M. Minifie of the New York *Herald Tribune*) gives as his own measured judgement the estimate that Britain alone can easily accommodate an air force which is three or four times its present size, in the British Isles alone. Long before the R.A.F. is tripled in size, the Anglo-American air strength, according to ascertainable facts of America's aircraft production capacity for the next two years, will be definitely superior to that of Nazi Germany. Moreover, I should certainly be far more inclined to trust the considered opinion of Mr. Minifie, after his long months of first-hand observation in Great Britain, than a sweeping general statement by a man who cannot possibly know the degree and amount of airfield expansion in the British Isles over the past two years. Mr. Minifie has been known and respected for years as an exceptionally careful and conscientious foreign correspondent. He assures me that Britain's air strength, thanks to constantly increasing American shipments, has grown immensely in recent months. He estimates that before very long the R.A.F. will be able to send approximately 2,000 bombers over Germany in a single night. When that happens I think it safe to say that a turning-point in the war will have come; for it is aerial bombardment, first and foremost, which can and will break German resistance. The testimony of observers from Berlin is virtually unanimous on that point.

I have been discussing Mr. Lindbergh's defeatist thesis from two important angles which he consistently refuses to explore in his isolationist speeches; from the angle of Ame-

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rica's present and future capacity for aircraft production, and from the angle of the actual record of performance by machines and men in war-time aerial combat. It is indeed astonishing that Lindbergh has ignored these decisive factors so completely. Nevertheless it is equally important to study some of the chief things which Lindbergh says, as well as the matters which he neglects to discuss. Going back to October 1939, I find Lindbergh declaring:

'This Western Hemisphere is our domain. It is our right to trade freely within it. . . . From the Hawaiian Islands to Bermuda, from Canada to *South America* [italics mine] we must allow no invading army to set foot. These are the outposts of the United States. . . . Sooner or later we must demand the freedom of this continent and its surrounding islands from the dictates of European power.'

To-day Mr. Lindbergh counsels the American people to permit the triumphant Nazi Germany to consolidate its domination over all Europe and Great Britain, thereby winning complete control of all Africa. With German submarines based on the Canary and the Cape Verde islands and with German bombers based at Dakar on the west coast of Africa, only 1,620 miles from the shores of Brazil, how can Lindbergh imagine that the United States navy could possibly control the South Atlantic? By what conceivable means could he expect that American forces, operating from bases much farther removed, could keep invading Nazi forces out of South America?

This is but another of the repeated contradictions in Lindbergh's speeches. It is impossible, however, to resist quoting the following statements from his Chicago address of 4 August 1940: 'If we desire to keep America out of war we must take a lead in offering a plan of peace,' Lindbergh urged. A few moments later he also asserted: 'People are beginning to realize that the problems of Europe cannot be solved by the interference of America.' How Mr. Lindbergh would have the United States offer a peace plan to Europe without 'meddling' in European affairs he did not explain.

When the Lindbergh ire is stirred by the thought of

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American interventionists he says some quite extraordinary things: 'The responsibility for the downfall of the democracies of Europe will rest squarely upon the shoulders of the interventionists who led their nations into war uninformed and unprepared.' Or what have the interventionists to say about 'the long list of prostrate nations in Europe who, *under their leadership* [italics mine], jumped into war hastily'? So the Finns, the Poles, the Norwegians, the Dutch, the Belgians, the Greeks, and the Yugoslavs were all interventionists. Apparently they were not attacked; they just itched to go to war before they were prepared. It almost seems that Mr. Lindbergh's mental processes must have been schooled and polished by Dr. Goebbels or some of his chief assistants. For where, in our present world, do such incomprehensible thought-processes exist save in Nazi Germany? As a matter of cold and indisputable fact it was the isolationists in Norway, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, and other countries who consistently opposed large expenditures for national defence. This is a matter of record over the past twenty years, but, obviously, Mr. Lindbergh has read little if any modern European history. Instead he asks rather plaintively: 'Why, in this second century of our national existence, must the quarrels of the Old World be thrust into our midst?' This is a strange question to be asked by a man who once flew the Atlantic Ocean in less than half as many hours as it took days for Columbus to span it. If Mr. Lindbergh should start flying bombers to Britain in a single hop of seven or eight hours, would that possibly make it clear to him why the quarrels of the Old World are thrust inexorably into our midst?

However, by all odds the most important things which Mr. Lindbergh says are not directly related to Europe and the war, but to our life in the United States. For some months now he has been crusading, under the auspices of the America First Committee, for a 'new leadership' in America. 'With adequate leadership we can be the strongest and most influential nation in the world.' What Lindbergh has to say on this subject commands the closest scrutiny. How he has pro-

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gressively developed his thesis, putting forward one hitherto unvoiced idea and then another, merits more attentive study than almost anything which is being said in the United States to-day. Here are some of the most arresting quotations:

Minneapolis, 10 May 1941: 'But the kind of democracy we fought for in the last war doesn't exist to-day, *even in our own country* [italics mine]. . . . There was *once a time* [italics mine] in America when we could impose our will by vote. . . . The people of this nation were not given a chance to vote on the greatest issue of our generation.'

Behind these words is the clear intimation that our present American democracy is not 'the kind of democracy' Americans have usually had. Even graver is the insinuation that the true popular will of the American people can no longer be expressed through the ballot-box. This is the only inference, and it is a very grave one. Two weeks later, speaking in Madison Square Garden in New York City, Lindbergh made bold to develop his new philosophy much further:

'We had no more chance to vote on the issue of peace or war last November than if we had been a totalitarian state ourselves. We in America were given just about as much chance to express our beliefs at the election last fall as the Germans would have been given if Hitler had run against Göring. . . . From every section of our country a cry is rising against this war. But it is a cry that reaches beyond the question of war alone. . . . *It asks how this situation came about. It demands an explanation of what happened at the elections last November.*'

Let us consider what is the full meaning behind these words. For if it is the right of every American to oppose the policies of our government, it is none the less a very grave thing to insinuate that the entire electoral machinery of a presidential campaign was a farce and that the elections themselves were either a sham or illegal. What does Lindbergh mean when he says the people had no chance to vote on the issue of peace or war? But the Democrats and the Republicans adopted platforms on this subject, voted by majorities at the conventions of both these parties. Under

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the Constitution of the United States it is Congress, and Congress alone, that is empowered to adopt or reject a recommendation to send our armed forces into war. Would Lindbergh amend the Constitution or put it aside? He seems to be demanding a peace or war plebiscite—but there has never been such a plebiscite in the history of our country. It is not provided for in the American Constitution. Moreover, it would be absolute folly to attempt to hold national elections whenever the United States was confronted with the threat of war. To make suggestions and insinuations of this sort at a period of great national stress and crisis is to ferment disbelief in American democratic institutions and the basic rules of procedure of our government. It is to appeal to mass emotionalism and to encourage the spread of mass hysteria. Quite frankly, declarations of this sort inject a note of rebelliousness (if not quite a note of revolt) into a public debate which every sincere American isolationist must desire to maintain with respect and reverence for our democratic processes of government.

It is an unhappy thing to be forced to discuss a question like this, but Mr. Lindbergh has posed a question which can only be ignored now at the gravest kind of risk to orderly political life in the United States between the present moment and our next presidential elections. We must examine his words and ask what they mean. A popular cry, he says, demands an explanation 'of what happened at the elections last November'. Does Mr. Lindbergh insinuate that these elections were illegal? Does he intend to insinuate that President Roosevelt should be impeached? Can he possibly mean to plant the idea in the minds of many people that, in due time and if provocation is regarded as sufficiently great by some of our American citizens, it may be necessary to 'over-rule' the elections or set them aside? Having granted Lindbergh the complete sincerity of his desire to keep America out of war, one would be more than reluctant to credit him with any such motives as these. Yet the words remain and the possible insinuations behind them are the most fearsome and most freighted with potential danger to our internal,

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domestic tranquillity of any public utterances which have been made by a prominent citizen in the United States for many years.

I am earnestly convinced that this fact must not be blinked. I am more than ever convinced about this because the phraseology which Lindbergh used, inadvertently or otherwise, happens to have a definite similarity to language which I have heard and reported in other lands. Before the Franco uprising in republican Spain the Right-wing reactionaries employed similar phrases in challenging the legality of the 1936 Spanish elections. They, too, demanded an 'accounting' and an 'explanation'. In the days before the Nazis came to power in Germany, their denunciations of the legally elected republican government were launched from the same angle, if in much more open and vitriolic manner. The Nazis in Austria and in Danzig also 'demanded' explanations. Finally, it is an established fact that the Nazi technique for setting aside previous electoral verdicts in disputed territories or neighbouring countries has always been to create a clamorous agitation for a plebiscite. We may make every effort to be fair to Mr. Lindbergh, to make due allowance for his noteworthy lack of political experience, and to accept the possibility that his choice of language (despite the obvious care with which his speeches are written) may simply be unfortunate. Nevertheless the parallels in these particular phrases of his must remain more than a little disturbing to anyone familiar with the devices of public agitation and agitators.

At Philadelphia on 30 May 1941 Mr. Lindbergh launched an inexcusably bitter and far-fetched attack upon the President of the United States, to whom he did not deign to refer as 'the President'—perhaps not an unintentional omission. He said: 'Mr. Roosevelt claims that Hitler desires to dominate the world. . . . But it is Mr. Roosevelt himself who advocates world domination when he says that it is our business to control the wars of Europe and Asia and that we in America must dominate the islands off the African coast.'

Does it not strike you as strange that Lindbergh can speak

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so passionately in denouncing President Roosevelt for 'himself advocating world domination' when the man who accepted a decoration from Field-Marshal Göring has never, in any of his public speeches, denounced Nazi Germany's violation of Poland, Norway, Holland, Belgium, or any of the other victims of Hitlerism? Does it not seem almost inexplicable that the only moral indignation which Lindbergh has yet revealed has been reserved, not for the ravagers and enslavers of more than twelve nations, but for an American President who points out factually that control of Dakar and the Cape Verde Islands is essential for the defence of the American nations? On the record of his public utterances over the past year, what can one expect Mr. Lindbergh to be advocating next month or next year?

It is far from reassuring, after careful study of his speeches, to note that Lindbergh appeals frequently to mass emotions and mass prejudices and that some of his statements can scarcely be described as other than distortions of the facts. 'For years', he said at Minneapolis, 'the true facts about Europe have been hidden from us. Any attempt to tell them met with the utmost criticism and opposition.' One can only conclude that Mr. Lindbergh has failed to read the American newspapers, which have the well-earned reputation of publishing the most accurate foreign news reports in the world. One must conclude that he has never read Edgar Ansel Mowrer's *Germany Turns the Clock Back*; G. E. R. Gedye's *Betrayal in Central Europe*, and the long list of books by such American correspondents as Vincent Sheean, William Henry Chamberlain, John T. Whitaker, Herbert L. Matthews, Eugene Lyons, and many others. I feel pretty certain that he never read my little volume *Nazi Means War*. And I would wager a week's salary that Mr. Lindbergh has paid little attention to Edmond Taylor's *The Strategy of Terror*, if indeed he has glanced at it at all. For we have ample evidence from his speeches that Mr. Lindbergh is not particularly concerned about that organized system of unmitigated terrorism which is Nazism. Nevertheless, he is making a demagogic and poisonous distortion when he assures American audiences

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that 'the true facts about Europe have been hidden from us' for years. Such statements reflect little credit either upon Mr. Lindbergh's intelligence or upon his integrity.

Since Charles A. Lindbergh is calling for a new leadership in America, we have a right to ask: what kind of leadership? If it is the kind of leadership which is contained in his speeches, you will search in vain for a presentation of facts and figures. You will search in vain for a scientific and rounded statement of the role of aviation in this war. You will search in vain for any explanation as to how the United States is to defend the Western Hemisphere, particularly South America, if Nazi Germany is permitted to defeat Britain and her allies. You will search in vain for an objective, dispassionate examination of America's alternatives in the world crisis.

But you will find an undeniable outline of the kind of leadership which Lindbergh calls upon Americans to follow. It is a leadership which has never once, in any of the Lindbergh speeches from the beginning of the war to July 1941, voiced a moral condemnation of the lawlessness and gangsterism of Hitler's Nazism. It is a leadership which, in all this time, has never once publicly repudiated the creed or practices of Nazi totalitarianism. Up to the present time the Lindbergh leadership happens also to be of a vague and indefinite variety which has never once declared publicly: 'I believe in the preservation of American democracy and the American Constitution. I favour vital reforms inside the United States, but I repudiate the imposition of these reforms by force. I pledge myself to the pursuance and observation of our established democratic electoral processes.' Perhaps Mr. Lindbergh takes all this for granted and so has never discussed it. Nevertheless, those Americans who read and analyse the Lindbergh speeches will not be able to take this for granted if they continue to develop their recent contents and in their recent direction. What Americans need most from Mr. Lindbergh are two things: a statement of faith and loyalty to the American democracy and its free institutions; a clear-cut indication that any great nation must be



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governed by moral as well as by materialistic conceptions. On these all-important grounds American isolationists and interventionists must meet and unite if we in the United States are to escape ultimate internal violence and disaster—if we are to remain free.

### \* Postscript:

While I was organizing the material for this chapter I sent the following telegram to Charles A. Lindbergh at his home:

‘As a war correspondent recently returned from Europe I hereby invite you to debate with me, either by radio or in a public hall, under conditions to be determined, the issue as to whether America should support Britain to the limit in her struggle against Germany or whether American security is to be found in isolationism. Since you hold that Americans should vote on this issue I assume you will gladly debate it after the tradition of Lincoln and Douglas. Will you kindly advise me telegraphically at the earliest possible moment? Yours sincerely,

LELAND STOWE.’

It is more than a month since this telegram was sent to Mr. Lindbergh. I have received no reply. Nor am I at all surprised.

Nevertheless I felt it would be only fair to give Mr. Lindbergh the opportunity to debate these matters. My invitation to him for such public debate still stands. But Mr. Lindbergh, it seems, does not enjoy such an old-fashioned American custom as public debate. Until the present time, at any rate, he has consistently avoided participation in a two-sided platform discussion of the fateful issues which confront the United States of America.

## *Chapter 18*

### THE LAST THAT DARE

Another year, another deadly blow,  
Another mighty empire overthrown,  
And we are left or shall be left alone—  
The last that dared to struggle with the foe.

(Wordsworth: 1806)

**O**n the evening of 19 June 1940 Ralph W. Barnes sat down to file a dispatch from Berlin. He had spent the day sounding out the state of mind of high Nazi officials in the German Foreign Office and elsewhere. It was the very moment when Hitler was preparing to send his armistice terms to France, yet these Nazi bigwigs had betrayed an exceptional amount of irritation and truculence when Ralph Barnes pressed his questions along one particular line. Ralph was not following in the wake of the day's obvious news about French capitulation. He was digging for the evidence of a profound change in Nazi Germany's policy, something that might some day alter the whole course of the war a long way in the future. Before the world-shaking sensation had yet run its course on the western front Ralph Barnes, with the true instincts of the great correspondent, was probing for the electrical wires that would lead to another explosion which would rock the world many months later. He was digging in Berlin, but looking eastward while almost everyone else was watching western Europe. Characteristically, he found out what he wanted to know.

So Ralph Barnes sat down that night and wrote the dispatch which, far in advance of anything written by other correspondents, called the turn on Germany's invasion of Soviet Russia. Two days later he was expelled from Germany

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and for weeks he criticized himself severely. He felt he should have written the story much more prudently and accused himself of having left his newspaper unprotected in Berlin. Actually he was blaming himself for having scooped the world—for having filed one of the most significant and revealing dispatches that had been sent out of Berlin throughout the first twenty-two months of the war. The essentials of what Ralph wrote were as follows:

‘With half a million or more Soviet troops occupying the three Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, the Soviet-German pact of non-aggression of last August, which at no time was based on anything more substantial than opportunism, appeared to have been liquidated in fact, though not in theory. To put it bluntly, the Wilhelmstrasse and, presumably, Führer Adolf Hitler himself<sup>1</sup> are angered by this abrupt occupation in force of the Baltic states by the Red army. . . . It is not reasonable to think that anyone in the German high command has any thought of an attack on Soviet Russia now, or even very soon. What is happening to-day in the Baltic may not have its *sequel until next year or the year after*. . . . The very acts of Moscow to-day . . . might be used later by Berlin as a pretext for a settlement of accounts with the Soviet Union.’

This is the kind of superb foreign correspondence which the Pulitzer prize committee (in common with Charles A. Lindbergh when he says ‘the true facts about Europe have been hidden from us’) was apparently incapable of understanding, at least until Hitler made it all very plain exactly one year and two days later. Then the New York *Herald Tribune* paid honour to its author and to itself by reprinting Ralph Barnes’s forecast of the Nazi-Soviet war. This is the only instance I happen to know of in which a foreign correspondent’s dispatch, many months after its author’s death, has reappeared in print in his own newspaper as news. After all, that is a far greater distinction than most of the recent Pulitzer awards have proved to be. Some three weeks after

<sup>1</sup> This was where Barnes later insisted he had erred. It was fatal to mention Hitler’s personal reaction, however accurately.

Ralph filed his story from Berlin I wrote a dispatch from Bucharest about the end of the Hitler-Stalin honeymoon. Ralph's story was much better than mine, but the Nazis' reaction to my trespassing upon the same forbidden subject was also interesting. Since they could not expel me from Germany, as they did Ralph Barnes, they refused to grant me a visa to enter Germany, even after having previously extended repeated indirect invitations for me to come to Berlin. The Nazi hierarchy simply did not want anyone to tell the truth about the growing hostility between Germany and the Soviets. Now, in the last week of June 1941, Nazi divisions are smashing into Polish Russia and the Ukraine and the whole world knows what Ralph Barnes clearly saw on 19 June 1940.

This is the thing that had to happen sooner or later. But the supreme irony of Nazi Germany's unannounced onslaught upon her 'non-aggression' pact partner of less than two years' standing lies in the fact that Soviet Russia sought safety in the role of the world's super-isolationist. Through all these months of war Stalin practised appeasement and isolation as no other chief of state has done. The Soviets possessed a gigantic army of more than ten million men and had spent years frantically making armaments of all kinds. All this man-power and armament proved of no avail, just as Moscow's recurrent concessions to appease Berlin brought no security. So the world's greatest ostrich meets the fate of all isolationists who would hide their heads from Nazism.

At this date, while the reports from the Germano-Russian fronts are still extremely fragmentary, it would be idle to prognosticate about the fateful clash between Brown and Red Bolshevisms. I am quite willing to hazard one or two personal opinions, however, strange as they may possibly look in print a couple of months from now. I expect Hitler will get as much of the Ukraine as he wants, and probably the southern Caucasus and the rich oil fields of Baku as well. I shall be surprised if this essential part of the Nazis' Russian campaign lasts more than a few weeks, though I should like very much to be mistaken about that. Even so,

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whether the Nazi-Soviet war is fairly long or quite short, this eastern conflict has given the British Isles another supremely important lease on ultimate victory. It provides a number of invaluable weeks for the shipment of American war material to Britain, and with an unprecedented degree of freedom from aerial attack. Thus the Russian campaign has offered very great opportunities.

Adolf Hitler marches in the footsteps of Napoleon. Whatever the Moscow road may bring him in initial victories or final troubles, the Nazis' war against Britain and her allies remains undecided. So long as this is true the final outcome of Nazism's bid for world domination will be determined, and can only be determined, by the United States of America. Thus, the future of 150,000,000 people in the Nazi-conquered European countries, of more than 40,000,000 people in the British Isles, of scores of millions throughout Latin America, and of 143,000,000 people in North America depends uniquely upon what America does about the war, and in the war. This fact is inescapable for any person who has studied the lessons of Nazi conquest of fourteen nations or has pondered the frightful efficiency of Brown Bolshevism's technique of conquest from within. Whether we Americans like it or not, the Nazi revolution has come to us.

On the eve of July 1941 we are not yet in the 'shooting war'. But America *is* in the war. As President Roosevelt said on 27 May, 'We know enough by now to realize that it would be suicide to wait until they [the dictators] are in our front yard. When your enemy comes at you in a tank or a bombing plane, if you hold your fire until you see the whites of his eyes, you will never know what hit you. Our Bunker Hill of to-morrow may be several thousand miles from Boston.' This is honesty and wisdom. It is not emotionalism. That evening President Roosevelt continued to chart the course from which there can be no turning back.

'We shall actively resist wherever necessary, and with all our resources, every attempt by Hitler to extend his Nazi domination to the Western Hemisphere, or to threaten it.'

'Never in the history of the world has a nation lost its

democracy by a successful struggle to defend its democracy.'

'To-day the whole world is divided between human slavery and human freedom—between pagan brutality and the Christian ideal. *We choose human freedom*—which is the Christian ideal.'

'*We will not accept a Hitler-dominated world.* And we will not accept a world, like the post-war world of the 1920's, in which the seeds of Hitlerism can again be planted and allowed to grow.'

'We in the Americas will decide for ourselves whether, and when, and where our American interests are attacked or our security threatened.'

'We mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour.'

So the die is cast, and from this great decision there can be no retreat either with safety or with honour. For American interests *are* attacked by Nazism, and American security *is* threatened. The great majority of the American people know in their hearts that these things are true; and they know this despite their natural repugnance for war and all its cost, risks, and sufferings. Nevertheless, a great many American nerves are by no means prepared to face the grim realities of war. People cling to their peacetime comforts and luxuries. Parents cling to their sons. And being incurable extremists, defeatism assails American minds with doubts, again and again. People ask: 'Can Nazi Germany be defeated?' They asked it after the capitulation of France, after the fall of Yugoslavia and Greece, after Crete. Whenever Hitler possesses Syria or Egypt, or the wheat lands of the Ukraine and the oil fields of Baku—then, in any of these events, American defeatism will thrive as never before. 'If the Nazis take southern Russia, can Hitler still be defeated?'

My answer to this is: yes, of course Nazi Germany can still be defeated. It will be a long and cruel task; perhaps much longer than it would have been otherwise. *But the only place in the world that this Second World War can be won or lost is in the United States.* If we are united and brave and willing to give our all, if we are capable of becoming once more the nation

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we were in 1917, we shall preserve our own freedom while saving freedom for the world. Hitler and the Nazi high command know they cannot police Europe from the Norwegian fjords to the Ural Mountains or the Suez Canal—and still fight a long war successfully against the combined might and resources of the British Empire and the United States. This is why I wrote, as long ago as February 1941, that 'the Ukraine might well be the cheapest and perhaps the last important Blitzkrieg victory that Hitler can now hope to gain anywhere in Europe. . . . It may well be that the Hitler timetable [for attempted invasion of the British Isles] will have to be reversed before another year is out and the Soviets moved up to the position of the first "next victim".'

Why did I then contemplate Soviet Russia being chosen by Hitler as first victim, ahead of the British Isles? Because Nazi Germany (despite all of Mr. Lindbergh's conspicuously undocumented assertions) possessed much too narrow a margin of aerial superiority over the R.A.F. to go all-out against Britain, especially if she could hope to compel a Munich peace surrender in some other way. Because Nazi army leaders were confident they could obtain a relatively cheap and swift (and world-stupefying) triumph over the Soviets' Red army. Because Germany needs desperately much more bread to feed herself and the enslaved millions in occupied countries, and the Nazis have long dreamed (perhaps very rashly) about all the wheat and oil they could get out of southern Russia. Finally because—and this is most important of all—Hitler, if he could not and did not attack Britain in the spring of 1941, must immediately try to stun the world's nerves, but especially the nerves of the American people. If his Nazi legions could destroy the cream of the Red army within a few weeks, this stupendous blow would swell inestimably the ranks of the isolationists and defeatists in the United States. As a result American aid to Britain might be fatally retarded, crippled, and discredited at home. In hard reality if that goal were achieved, it would go much further to assure the complete triumph of Nazism than all the wheat and oil in Russia.

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So people ask: 'But do you really still believe that Nazi Germany can be defeated?'

And the answer is not merely yes. The answer is:

I believe that Nazi Germany *will* be defeated.

I believe the turning-point, regardless of developments in Russia and in Syria and Egypt, is nearer than we think. It will be a road of privation, suffering, and anguish; a road of 'blood, sweat, and tears' for the American people as well as for the British. It may endure for only two years more, or it may last for three or four. All of these things will be of secondary importance in the history of humanity if, at the end, the gangsterism and terrorism and slavery of the Nazis' Brown Bolshevism is destroyed for ever. I believe that will happen; and it is a deep and quiet and reassuring belief.

But how can Nazi Germany be defeated?

I can only answer this with my own considered opinions, based upon a rather close acquaintance with the war and upon a much wider range of travel through war-convulsed Europe than most American correspondents happen to have had. I would summarize my answer in this fashion: The armed forces of Nazism can be vanquished because—

1. Anglo-American superiority in the air will be achieved within a year, will gradually throw the Germans upon the defensive, and will increasingly destroy German production and civilian morale.

2. The battle for the control of the Atlantic Ocean can and will be won by the Anglo-American allies.

3. The tremendous lengthening of Germany's communication lines through the Balkans and into Russia and the Near East creates grave and almost insuperable problems.

4. The recruiting grounds for Europe's future armies of liberation cover fifteen occupied nations, including Italy, and a total population of nearly 200,000,000 people.

5. Germany's policing and garrisoning requirements have become so far-flung and enormous that it is most doubtful whether she can also seize and hold all those strategic points on the African continent from which liberating forces can move against Nazi outposts.



6. With a mounting will for freedom all of Europe's conquered peoples are steadily increasing sabotage and disruptive activities as the war goes on.

The first lesson of Nazi Blitzkrieg successes is the fact that they have been achieved primarily by air power. Norway was first occupied from the air and by sea, but Norway was conquered chiefly by airplanes. Resistance in Holland and Belgium was shattered by ruthless bombing. The Nazi air force played a vital role in the French débâcle. Yugoslavia, Greece, and Crete fought hopeless fights only because of German aerial superiority. The same, of course, was true in large measure in Poland. Therefore it cannot be doubted that the early dawn of Anglo-American air equality, and then ultimate supremacy, will change the entire trend of the war. The German air force, plane for plane and man for man, is already inferior to the R.A.F. When the democratic allies also possess superiority in numbers—and America will never be handicapped by the difficulties in raw materials and the eternal transportation problems which beset Germany—the real strain upon Nazi production capacity will coincide with incessant blows against Germany's civilian morale. Correspondents and observers who have spent most of the war in Germany are almost unanimously agreed that wholesale destruction, on a scale similar to what the Nazis have rained upon Coventry, Plymouth, and London, is certain to have a pronounced effect upon the German people. They say German nerves are not nearly so strong as British nerves; that the German people have had no stomach or enthusiasm for this war since it began; that Hitler's string of Blitz victories is the only thing which serves to bolster up German morale, and if the Blitzes run out or come in reverse—then correspondents from Berlin predict that the break-up of morale on the home front will develop with astonishing speed. In any event, it is obvious that Britain and America can attain air superiority and at the perfect psychological moment when victories on land for Hitler have been just about exhausted. The youngsters of the R.A.F. are supremely confident about what they will do to 'Jerry' when they can put two or three

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thousand bombers over Germany per night. There is not the slightest reason to believe they are fooling themselves. All the evidence of the Second World War, to date, indicates that the conflict will be determined primarily in the air.

Of course, Allied armies for attack will also be required. But according to all present circumstances the area for attack will be widely dispersed—along the west coast of Africa, or in central and east Africa, or in the Near East. Wherever there are landing parties, whether in Belgium, Norway, or the Balkans, superiority in the air alone will make them possible; and that kind of superiority will mean the very kind of destruction inflicted upon all German communication lines, bridges, and railroads which they have hitherto inflicted upon those armies which they have attacked. It seems to me that the decisive land engagements of this war cannot be one or two great battles, like the Argonne or Saint-Mihiel, but hundreds of smaller battles scattered over vast areas—save for the final, unrelenting battle from the air.

But Europe's vast recruiting grounds for her future armies of liberation are completely overlooked by most persons who are deeply concerned over the possibility of a second A.E.F. If you have lived with these now enslaved peoples, from Norway to Rumania, Yugoslavia; and Greece, you realize that all these millions of men can never be eradicated and never utterly controlled. Every day of their subjugation heightens their will to resist and finally to fight from the moment any counterattacking Allied force can reach them and distribute arms. They will fight with the same savage, unrestrained fury with which the Spaniards once rose against Napoleon's legions. They are waiting for their day, and their day will come.

Associated with Europe's millions of nameless democratic allies is Germany's terrific problem of transportation. She desperately needs the foodstuffs, grain, oil, and other raw materials from Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Rumania, but these supplies have been most seriously disrupted and diminished by the successive Balkan and Russian campaigns.

Those who know Soviet Russia will insist that, even should all of the Ukraine and the Caucasus be usurped by German divisions, the Nazis would be confronted with a simply stupendous problem of production and transportation. Within a year's time it is highly questionable whether Germany would obtain any sizable increases in wheat and oil over what Soviet Russia managed to transport as a non-aggression partner—if that much. Vast numbers of German technicians, as well as armed troops, would be tied up and bogged down with this problem. Meanwhile thousands of miles of railroad, all through the Balkan countries and into Russia, would be exposed to persistent sabotage by bitterly hostile populations. It will be impossible for German soldiers to patrol every two hundred yards of these vital railroad lines, even in Rumania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia, without considering the nightmare which Russian spaces are certain to offer. This is why Hitler's tremendous military expansion, like Napoleon's before him, constitutes a serious danger unless he can get a swift verdict in the west. If the war drags through next winter and then another, it will be the Nazi conquerors who, for the first time, will be steadily weakened by assaults from within.

Hitler knows this and fears it. He must get either a military decision or an appeasers' peace before 1942 begins, if that can possibly be managed. This is why the Führer sent his pet diplomatic weasel, Franz von Papen, to see the British Ambassador in Ankara at the moment the Nazi armies attacked Russia. Hitler was angling (none but he would have the audacity and gall) for an Anglo-German deal to suppress Bolshevism—only the Red variety, of course! As the *New York Times* Ankara correspondent pointed out, Hitler thought it would be most convenient for British and all democratic hatred of Nazism to be diverted into detestation of Communism. It would be nice for the British to stop fighting and for everyone to embrace the Nazis as world benefactors, whose lily hands had never—no, never—been reddened until they set upon the Soviets. Somehow it seems superbly fitting that the same Nazi leaders who made a deal

with Soviet Russia in order to have their hands free to destroy the British should suddenly reverse themselves, after a full year of failure to conquer Britain fighting alone, and try to arrange a deal with the British in order to facilitate their assault upon the Soviets.

But we were discussing some of the reasons why Nazi Germany can and will be defeated. When you have reviewed even a few of the factors for ultimate Allied victory certain matters become more evident. The defeatists shout: 'Too late' and the so-called realists say: 'Let's be practical.' Do these defeatists and 'realists' usually admit the determinant role of air power in this war? And if by chance some of them do admit that fact, do they accept the further fact—vouched for by America's leading authorities in our aviation industry—that Britain and the United States are already well on the road toward superiority in the air and are certain to achieve it? Do the defeatists consider the appalling lengths and quirks of Germany's communication lines? Are they familiar with the staggering problems of transportation in Spain and Portugal, in the Balkans and in Russia? Why do they shut their eyes to the tremendous reservoirs of European manpower which are awaiting the day when they can be released against Nazism? Testimony is virtually unanimous on the part of observers coming out of Germany that the German people cannot take it when they are on the receiving end of terrific bombardments; that their hearts are not in this war; that the Nazis will be lost once they can no longer feed the German people on victories. Why do the defeatists and the 'realists' consistently ignore the psychological and moral factors in warfare? In regard to some of them I can only conclude that their own morale tends to be as low as a dachshund's stomach. Wars have never been won by Calamity Janes. You cannot win freedom, neither can you hope to remain free in a revolution-swept world, with an artificial heart.

My experiences and observations over the first seventeen months of this war have taught me a number of unforgettable things. Foremost among these is the incredible and unpredictable power of fighting hearts. It is men and women

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who refuse to recognize fear who perform the impossible, in war-time even more astonishingly than in times of peace. I have been with the Finns, the Greeks, and the British and it so happens I have never met a defeatist among them. It so happens—and this is no coincidence—that their deeds will live for ever. I suspect that it is also true of their souls. Men of little soul and little faith have never changed or steadied the course of human history. No. We can never win freedom with artificial hearts.

I have learned that Nazism can only exist and expand by dividing, disrupting, and degrading its prospective victims. I have seen Nazism attack decency, morality, and idealism everywhere because these are mortal enemies of its system of rape and plunder. I have seen the Nazi assault upon spiritual values. I have seen Hitlerism exalt the lie, the broken pledge, the cunning and trickery of the jungle. I have seen it glorify deceit. I have seen it promote brutality and employ terrorism with a mocking smile. I have seen Nazism systematically destroy everything upon which human decencies and Christian ethics are based. I have learned the full meaning of the Nazi ideology, and also the full meaning of 'divide and rule'. I have learned, beyond any hope of logical, factual contradiction, that the world revolution of Brown Bolshevism thrives upon the self-centred blindnesses of men and nations; upon their materialistic appetites; upon their resignation to fear—and upon the fond, naïve assumption that any nation or any peoples can remain isolated indefinitely in the path of a revolutionary tornado.

After this ghastly succession of Nazi conquests and Nazi-made catastrophes plunging hundreds of millions of human beings into bloodshed, anguish, starvation, and death—after all this it seems incomprehensible that any of us in America should not yet see what has happened, or understand how it has happened. The long series of Nazi wars is nothing less than world revolution—yet many of us still will not admit it. The Nazi technique of conquest from within is already a menace to American parliamentary government and our free institutions—yet many Americans will not face

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this fact. The continued existence of Hitler's Brown Bolshevism leaves us no alternatives but to fight or surrender—yet many of us talk about minding our own business. Nazism, by its official declarations and by its repeated actions, is dedicated to fomenting civil violence and eventual rebellion and civil war *inside* the United States—yet many of us still cling to the assumption that the same appeasement and isolation which plunged the vast and powerful empire of Soviet Russia into disaster will preserve us from a similar fate. These are the most fantastic and incredible sleepwalkers of our time. They have eyes, and they see not. When at last their eyes have been put out they, too—like so many enslaved millions in Europe—will begin to see. All that is written here and all that I say here has been written and is said for them. There is only one way that Americans can be 'too late'. We can be too late for honour, too late for morality, too late for self-respect, too late for hope—too late for freedom. That was also true in 1860, but it did not happen. To-day our modern world cannot exist half slave and half free.

On the face of everything I have seen happen to that long, familiar list of European nations, it is evident beyond all denial that there is only one road to safety for the American people and that this is the high road. Even so, and admittedly, the dangers for us are very great. There can no longer be any national existence without great danger or without great sacrifices. For us in America these will be especially cruel because we are torn with dissensions and we are spiritually unprepared. We are also a spoiled people, perhaps more spoiled than the Swedes have been. Certainly we are far more divided. We have had years of New Deal reforms and of bitter opposition to these reforms. We have an important and influential upper class which has hated President Roosevelt so long that it now finds it almost impossible to transfer that hatred to the real enemy of our still functioning democratic system of free enterprise. Some of the oldest foes and bitterest critics of the Roosevelt administrations, however, have set a magnificent example by putting aside the past. They have seen the danger. They have placed America

first. They stand in the forefront of those who would rally all Americans to union and self-sacrifice. They are living and patriotic witnesses that it can be done.

Many of us, too, are still blinded to the unequalled menace of Nazism by deep-rooted dislike for the British. Some, like the Irish-Americans, have had ample cause. But these Irish-Americans to-day can scarcely give their seal of approval to the record and the deeds of Nazi Germany. I can understand the aversion of Americans toward those upper-class Britishers who have looked down their noses at us over the long years, rarely concealing either their snobbism or their envy. I myself have never had any use for this type of Englishman, who, it now appears, has succeeded in creating hundreds of thousands of isolationists in America, rendering the costliest kind of disservice to the cause of human freedom. But these particularly objectionable Britishers are not the British people, nor are they the ones who hold Hitlerism at bay week after week. Some of these, the small minority of insufferable Britishers, always hated to see America grow up. Now fate has punished them to a point where they, too, thank God that America *has* grown up.

But what do they, in any case, have to do with the fundamental fact that our own American security is now at stake? Supposing the house next door has been set afire and the sparks are flying nearer and nearer to my house; and supposing the house next door happens to be occupied by an Irish family, and the firemen who are fighting the blaze are all Irishmen, and I have always hated Irishmen. Supposing the same firebugs who ignited the house next door are roving all through the neighbourhood without police restraint. Would it not be abysmally stupid of me to refuse to lend a hand, simply because of a long-nurtured private feud of mine against the Irish? It should be plain by now that we must put America first in the only sense that matters—America first, ahead of domestic political quarrels or international prejudices. Nazism is the one and only unbridled force which now threatens to rule the entire world. Nazism is the only formidable, expanding, unchecked menace. Con-

fronted with such a danger we in America can only permit ourselves the luxury of lesser preoccupations at the certain risk of losing all that we hold dearest in life. Coming home from the war, it seems almost unbelievable that so many among us still fail to see this truth.

We are spiritually unprepared for the desperate struggle in which we are already involved, yet the United States of America has never had such a tremendous opportunity for spiritual leadership. We in America can scarcely begin to realize the moral authority which is still ours in this present war-ravaged world. Wherever I have been in Europe, from Finland and Norway through a dozen other lands, the great mass of the common people were looking to America. Oddly enough, even long after the capitulation of France, these little people maintained an unshaken faith. Throughout the Balkan countries only a few months ago, and I am certain it is still true to-day, people confidently expected Nazism to be defeated, and for two reasons—because of the fighting hearts of the British people plus a conviction that America would never abdicate her position as the mightiest nation on earth or renounce her moral principles. Everywhere millions of common people in Europe look to America with hope, because America has always meant hope and generosity and opportunity to them. They still will not believe any less than that of our nation and our people, nor can they persuade themselves that America is capable of committing suicide. This is why America will now rise to an unprecedented spiritual leadership in the community of nations, or America will deliberately destroy one of her most priceless possessions—the confidence and faith which the world's nameless millions now freely give to her as the symbol of humanitarian principles. Without that confidence, that faith, and that hope—at home as well as abroad—the United States will cease to be a world power or a world force. We shall drown ourselves in the mire of our own materialism and selfishness.

We, the American people, can defeat the Brown Bolshevism of Nazism for reasons of decency and honour and idealism. We can also assure the collapse and destruction of



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Hitlerism for imperative reasons of self-interest and our own national security. It so happens that both of these motive forces serve the same great ends. For we shall only save ourselves in this world revolution by saving others, whether the others are Chinese, Greek, British, or a score of other races and peoples. We cannot take the low road without abandoning ourselves as well as others. Because we do not live alone we cannot stand alone in this great world crisis. These are the reasons why the high road is already ours.

There will be inestimable suffering and the dangers will be great and the battle may be long. All this has happened to humanity before, but all this will pass. However great the cost, it will matter less than we can now know so long as we, the American people, have been true to ourselves and to that destiny which was shaped for us by men with brave hearts and great souls in the equally dark days of 1776. In the era of the Napoleonic despotism the British people were 'the last that dared'. To-day this is the privilege of the American people, as it will surely be the measure of their future honour and future glory.

We shall do this thing and by so doing America shall live. There is no other road to freedom.

## *Chapter 19*

### I GIVE YOU TO-MORROW

**A**s June heaves a gentle sigh and holds her hands out toward July, the world, in our little corner of Westchester County, is a green and smiling place. Just a few steps from the front door the shade lies deep and cool under our big oak tree. It is pleasant to sit there in the afternoon (or it will be for me when this chapter is finished), and pleasanter still in the evening. The boys have raced home from their last day at school and I shall put my typewriter aside for a while and now the four of us will have three whole weeks for ourselves and our friends and relatives. Three weeks may not seem very much, but they are really a great deal.

It is three summers since I have been where I could mow the lawn and I'm sure that would be an excellent thing for my body and soul. Nevertheless time has become rather too precious to be wasted on mowing the lawn. There are too many things still not done or still not said; too many little luxuries of companionship, too many books that you'll never have time to read, and walks which have been waiting too long to be taken. Above all there is the almost forgotten luxury of being at home, just being at home with virtually nothing to do—and three weeks in which to do it. Yes, and I finally found that particular Châteauneuf-du-Pape 1929 in the cellar. So we must have the right friends for dinner to enjoy it with us; and then save a couple of bottles for the next home-coming. It is the perfect wine for a big occasion like that.

For unless something most unexpected intervenes, the home team will soon be going back to LaGuardia Field and waving me off on the Clipper once more. I am thankful that

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it won't be for so many long months this time. Just the same, the wish I made in the bathtub in the King George Hotel in Athens last Christmas won't be fulfilled this year, it seems. Rida and Maurice and Anna will decorate another Christmas tree in our studio and I shall send another cablegram to pin on one of the branches. How many Christmases away from home would that make? Five out of the last six—that's as far back as I can remember right now, but that's rather too much. It looks as though we shall have to try and make it all up on 25 December 1942. There will be quite a lot to make up, some time in 1942.

People say: 'Why do you go back to the war? Haven't you done your share of war corresponding?' No, I can't honestly feel that I have just yet. There are still a great many truths about the war that American newspaper readers must be told. Some of us, by circumstance and experience, have been prepared for this task and we are the ones who must do it. In our profession it seems you have to go away in order to have an audience at home; and there will be important things about the war which will need saying in America next spring or summer. Perhaps by that time you would be able to serve your country more effectively in some other field. It is too early to know about that now. But you do know now that no American can truly serve his country in these days of its greatest danger by playing safe. You know something of what freedom costs and you have a feeling you will fight better when you have seen more of what it costs. You know, too, that any real leadership in to-day's and to-morrow's world must come from those who have taken the risks and shared the hardships. The world will not be remade by men who chose the safest or the easiest way. You don't have to be melodramatic about that, or about the routine of a war correspondent's job. In our time this simply happens to be terribly true and terribly important. The best steel will only come forth from the hottest furnace. It would be a fine thing to be worthy of the others; those who have formed the finest steel, yet kept within themselves the warmth of human compassion. That never seems to come the easy way.

But people say you could have a very comfortable life here in America. Certainly there are plenty of opportunities now. Some would say you were slightly daft to turn down an offer which actually promised to increase your income through the next year at least sixfold and probably considerably more than that. If you stopped to figure it out, probably that would be more money than any in your particular branch of the impractical Stowes had seen since the grandfather of the first Eliakim Stowe came to Massachusetts. But there are other things in this revolution-swept world of to-day that are a great deal more important than hard cash; especially more important than an excess of it. And if you have a feeling that there is still a job over there for you, what else could you do?

Just the same, September will come along and the evenings will be wonderfully pleasant beneath our oak tree, and wonderfully peaceful—if only the motors of the passing air liners did not make you think of other motors carrying another kind of freight. Bruce will be coming home from his first classes in high school and Alan will be shouting down the street, newly embarked in junior high. And you know they will be fourteen and twelve respectively, come December—and that one fact is one of the toughest things about going back to the war. There will only be a few years more and then they'll be stepping out into the world. You want these years pretty badly. If Providence will permit it, you don't intend to be cheated of them all. But what was it you told them when you left for Madrid during the Spanish war? Something about always remembering that the biggest things in life can never be had by playing safe. To-day it is just as true, and to-morrow comes for those who believe in To-morrow.

It is good to doubt, and sometimes necessary to doubt, but the greater good is reaped by those who believe. You can look around you and see it in your friends. You see it in the slow march of human progress. You see it in the British people who fight on and on. Can all this courage and grandeur and abnegation be lost? Never, in those invisible and timeless scales where the riches of the spirit are weighed

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for the treasure house of eternity. Nor shall they be lost for to-day and to-morrow, if we in America do our part. This is why you wait for autumn. For if the British people are still there, undefeated and unbowed on 1 November 1941, then Nazi Germany will never win the war. In the deepest recesses of your being you know this to be true. To-morrow is no longer far away. The dawn of to-morrow, though that dawning comes on dragging feet through one or more years of bloodshed and suffering, will then be almost here. If Britain still stands in November—if America sees to it that she endures that long—Hitler and his Nazi war lords will know that the revolution of Brown Bolshevism is doomed. Freedom's triumph will then be assured.

Now, for three whole weeks, we shall have time to pass quite an extravagant number of hours under the oak tree. School is out for all four of us. We shall be rather disgracefully lazy, I fear; and a little bit greedy in more ways than one. And when I open up the Châteauneuf-du-Pape we shall drink a magnificent toast, a toast which sums up all that we—and you and you and all the world—can ever hope for.

*I give you To-morrow.*





